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Saturday Review

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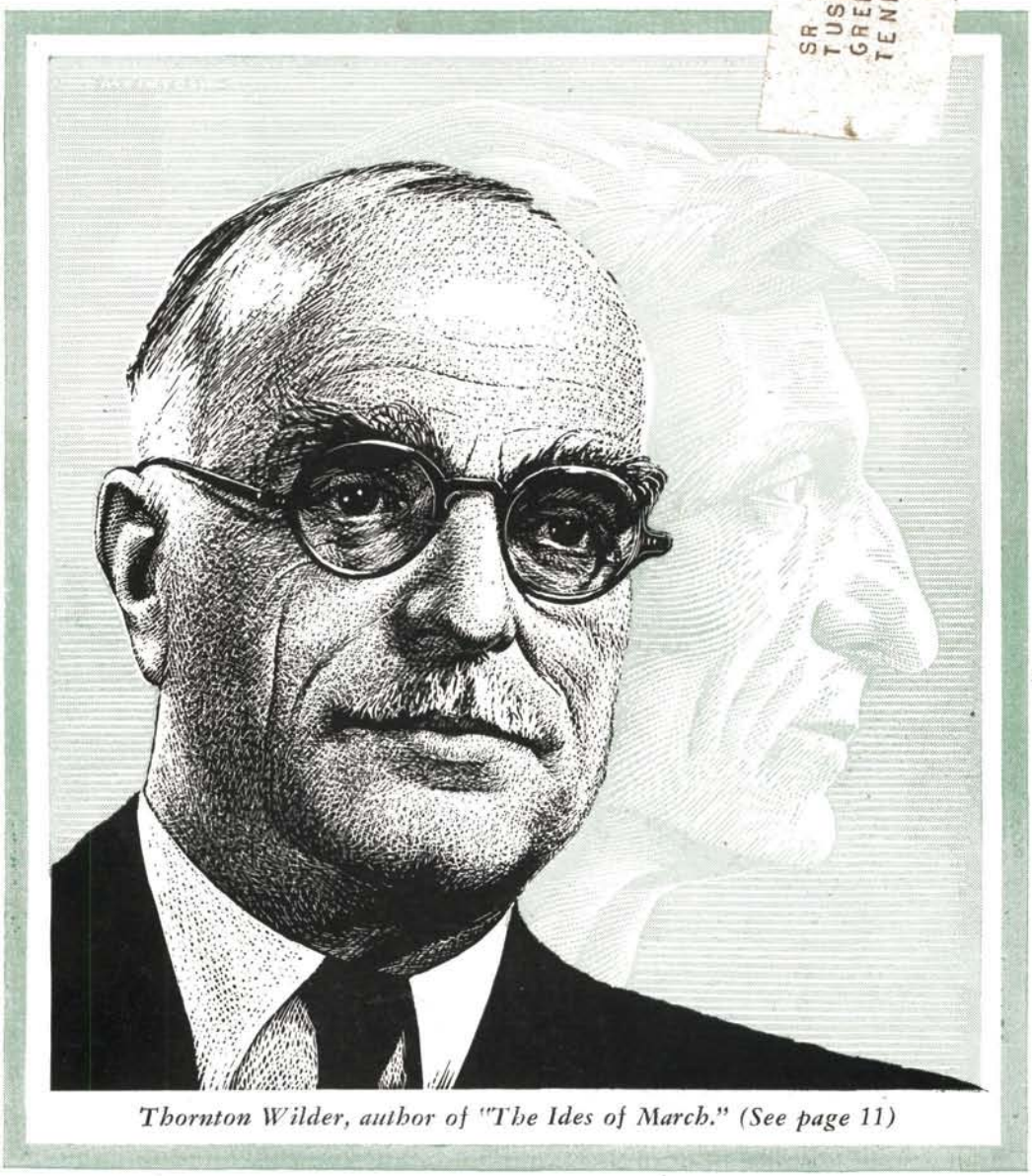

Thornton Wilder, author of "The Ides of March." (See page 11)

The Vultures of Peace

By HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

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What will these facts mean to the future of our nation?

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February 21, 1948

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TRADE Winds

SAXE COMMINS, working on his forthcoming "Basic Writings of George Washington," has come up with a fact that should stump the experts on any information quiz. George Washington, beyond question, was the richest President the United States ever has had. At one time his private property extended from the Potomac clear over to Kentucky!

Commins does not accept the theory, popular in some historical circles, that it was Alexander Hamilton who actually wrote Washington's Farewell Address. Commins cites a letter written to James Madison in Washington's own hand some four years before the farewell address was delivered that contains in essence all of the ideas that formed the body of that speech. Hamilton no doubt edited a bit, but that is all. . . .

There were no book clubs in Washington's day, of course, but had all the present ones been in existence, evidence points to the supposition that he would have subscribed only to the Classics Club. Washington frequently ordered packages of books from London for himself and his stepson, Jackie Custis, but no current authors ever seemed to be considered. Homer, Horace, Cicero, Martial, and Milton were favored, along with works of history, grammar, and Biblical exegesis. . . . Apparently Washington considered Voltaire, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Johnson, Pope, Swift, Sterne, and Fielding too nouveau to be important.

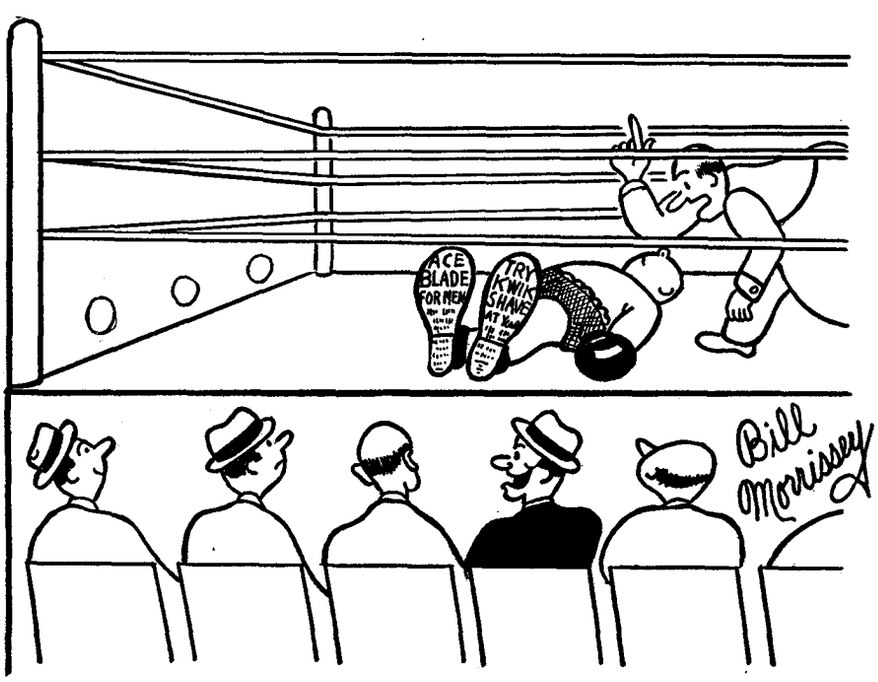
LLOYD MORRIS'S "Postcript to Yesterday" is a panorama of the American social scene from about a hundred years after the death of Washington to the present day. The people and the events dealt with bring back nostalgic memories of an era when America was secure and prosperous, and Europe a far-distant land whose problems seemed incredibly remote.

Morris received one of his most glowing notices from Orville Prescott, in *The New York Times.* Morris's sister rushed over to read it to him the morning it appeared. "Prescott says the book obviously was written by a gentleman of leisure," she reported. At the moment, Morris, having parted company with an incompetent servant the day before, was on his hands and knees scrubbing the kitchen floor. . . . The hoity-toity relatives of Edith Wharton, says Morris, took a dim view of her literary endeavors. Why was a girl in whose veins flowed the blood of Rhinelanders and Schermerhorns wasting her time in scribbling? They considered her slightly more eccentric than another remote cousin, immensely wealthy, "who spent his last years sitting on a marble shelf in the happy illusion that he was a bust of Napoleon." . . . Henry James explained to playwright Langdon Mitchell that he couldn't live in the United States because "a democracy provided no opportunity for subtlety of sex relationship." At the time, James was a confirmed bachelor of sixty-two. . . . J. P. Morgan, the elder, discovered that he could not buy coal from a company he controlled to supply a railroad he also controlled. Diamond Jim Brady had outwitted him. In a huff, Mr. Morgan tramped off to consult the famous astrologer Evangeline Adams, and became a regular client for years. . . . Mrs. Jack Gardner invited Mrs. Schuyler Van Rensselaer to dinner in her ultra-exclusive home, served her oysters, and then took her to a hotel for the remainder of the meal because she was too poor to keep a cook. . . . Mrs. Astor, sensing the waning of her social power, ignored precedent and engaged a young professional dancer to entertain her guests at a Newport garden-party. The guests were not particularly impressed. Neither was the dancer. Her name was Isadora Duncan. . . .

DWYE EVANS IS NOW a director of Heinemann's, the famous English publishing house, following in the footsteps of his late father, the well-loved Charlie Evans. Dwye first showed his literary sagacity as a schoolboy of twelve. He inserted a personal ad in *The* (London) *Bookseller* offering ten pounds (the prevailing price at the time) for a first-edition copy of Somerset Maugham's first novel, "Liza of Lambeth." When he succeeded in buying a copy, he sent it to his father with a note saying, "Won't you get Willie to autograph this for me, the next time he comes into the office?" Maugham wrote on the fly-leaf of the book, "For my young friend, Dwye Evans, who, if he doesn't get fifty pounds for this, is not the budding genius I take him for." . . . Albert Edward Wiggam, author of "Exploring Your Mind" and "The Marks of an Educated Man," lists himself in the Dutch Treat Club year-book as a "writer and lecturer," but once when *he* was a schoolboy he was the victim of paralyzing stage fright. He writes:

> On one occasion I carefully memorized a declamation beginning, "Adams and Jefferson are no more." When I reached the platform and faced the audience, my head was swimming so I scarcely knew where I was. I managed to gasp out the opening sentence, stating that Adams and Jefferson had passed away, and I saw I simply could not go farther. So I bowed to the audience and walked solemnly back to my seat amid great applause. The president, who talked dreadfully through his nose, got up and said, "Well, Edward, we are shocked to hear the sad news, but we will do what we can to bear up under the circumstances." . . .

HOWARD DIETZ, VICE PRESIDENT of MGM, and now collaborating with Arthur Schwartz on the musical re-



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DOUBLEDAY

"Don't the citizens storm the Bastille any more?"

vue based on John Gunther's "Inside U.S.A.," visited a small town in the deep South several years ago with his wife. He made friends with practically the entire local population, and sent them a lot of gifts, including toys and clothing for their children, after he returned to New York.

That will explain the following excerpts from the social notes in a recent issue of the town's lively gazette:

> Dietz Johnson will marry Claribel Jones at the bride's home on Sunday. The ushers will be Mayard Rawlings, Dietz Vennary, and Robert Dietz Clayburne.
>
> Dietz Pembroke was caught speeding on the Warrentown turnpike Friday evening. It was his third offense, and he was promptly fined fifty dollars by Judge Greentag. Careful there, Dietzy!
>
> Dietz Woodin cut short his visit to Atlanta by one full week. He explained, "They were taking too many of my Woodin nickels." . . .

Howard Dietz's latest story concerns an inter-denominational convention in a big hall in Chicago. In the course of the opening session, a Baptist lady in one of the front rows got up and called, "Is there a Christian Scientist in the audience?" A cheerful young woman in the rear of the hall answered, "Yes, I am a Christian Scientist." "That's fine! I wonder if you'd mind changing places with me," said the Baptist hopefully. "I seem to be in a terrible draught!" . . .

WHEN GEORGE MOORE died in 1933, all Ireland mourned for him. The throng at the funeral was so great that one little boy was pushed into the poet's grave. The next morning, a Dublin newspaper reported, "This unfortunate occurrence cast a pall over the entire proceedings." . . . The body of another man of letters was being transported from Manchester to London by lorry. The driver and his assistant stopped at a pub en route for refreshments, during which time a tramp climbed into the lorry and hid next to the coffin. Back on the road, the driver remarked, "Bli'me, it's cold." The tramp, teeth chattering, jumped up and cried, "You cold be'ind the motor! You ought to feel me!" . . . The driver and his assistant fainted. . . . Two prominent dress manufacturers met on Seventh Avenue. "Have you heard about our competitor Blumbaum?" asked one. "He dropped dead yesterday!" "What!" exclaimed the other incredulously. "At the height of the season?" . . . Reminds me of Russel Crouse's story of the day he rode to Boston on a day coach. An affable stranger took the seat beside him and asked, "What's your racket?" Crouse, who had discovered that the revelation of his true profession of playwright invariably led to complications, answered recklessly, "I'm a necktie salesman." "Me, I sell caskets," said the stranger. So all the way to Boston, Crouse desperately talked about caskets to avoid betraying his ignorance of the neckwear business. . . .

How did I get onto this subject, anyhow?

BENNETT CERF.

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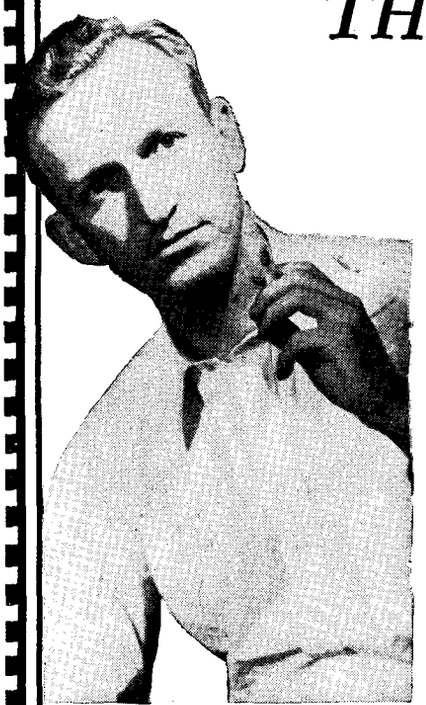
SOME of the novels Harper has recently published and will publish in the next few months are by authors whose standing is already established. Some are by authors whose names may be still unknown to you. We are proud of them all. We believe that all are important; that each makes a distinctive contribution to American literature—and to your pleasure as a reader.

JOHN HORNE BURNS'

THE Gallery



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The Saturday Review of Literature

The Vultures of Peace

HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

Howard Mumford Jones

TO ONE who is neither an economist nor a politician the signs of the times all point to the same breakdown of American influence in stricken Europe that occurred in the Nineteen Twenties—a breakdown due to the same dismal confusion of ends with means. What Europe hungers and thirsts after most deeply is moral and spiritual strength; what our policy insists upon giving Europe is materialism—a materialism which, whether you want to call it the Marshall plan, or the cold war against Russia, or the restoration of doubtful governments, or bolstering European currencies, springs from an erroneous concept of the uses of victory. We have lost an American point of view, and we have been infected by a European one—by the obsolete nineteenth-century notion that balance of power is a greater force in the international order than spiritual calm. But the history of Europe, since the French Revolution spent its force, shows the futility of trying to balance nation against nation, armament against armament, alliance against alliance, and currency against currency.

In the Nineteen Twenties Europe was threatened by the rise of Fascism—a movement illogical, incoherent, and inconsistent, the strength of which wholly lay in an illusory promise of spiritual calm for those who would adhere to its principles and participate in its triumph. If the opportunity for European Fascism partly came from political discontent and economic maladjustment, these more or less "practical" circumstances only partially explain its hold upon mankind, first in Italy, subsequently in other European nations and in Latin America. Politics and economics are simply forms of confidence between man and man. The essential appeal of Fascism was to the soul. Overburdened by the responsibilities of life, frightened by the incoherence of a state at once tyrannical and irresponsible, the individual European could through Fascism share the strength of the corporate spirit. He became a member in a mystical body. Participation in the party not only removed the crushing weight of freedom and frustration from the average man, it also gave him the strength of great causes, the assurance that he shared the total life of the nation, the race, the world. The fact that Fascism is a defeated cause has blinded every American leader—most of them mere "practical" men—to the central truth that the problem in Europe today is not Communism but loneliness. We have stripped away the illusory peace of Fascism, but we have given nothing in its place.

In the Twenties, as the menace, first of Mussolini, then of Hitler, later of Franco, grew darker and more formidable, observer after observer returned from the tragic continent to tell us the truth—that health is found in the souls of men, not in their banking systems. But these observers were, unfortunately, not members of the State Department, they were merely poets, novelists, painters, dancers, practitioners of the arts, men and women who, by the nature of their calling, were sensitive to register what I may call the barometric pressure of the spirit. They told us that what was breaking down in Europe was not so much an economic order or international currencies as man's confidence in himself and his fellow man. Again and again, in meetings, in books, in works of art, they implored us here in America to speak that necessary word of confidence in the soul, that reassurance that the great new nation of the West truly believed in the dignity of the individual and the brotherhood of man.

WE DID not speak it. The poets were "impractical"; the novelists were "pinks"; the dancers, the painters, the critics, the musicians were "irresponsible," "radical," or "well meaning." America was Harding, was Coolidge, was Frank B. Kellogg, was Andrew Mellon. America was the Fordney-McCumber tariff, was the Lusk laws, was the Ku Klux Klan, was the immigration act of 1924, which ended all hope that the inscription on the base of the Statue of Liberty meant what it said. America was the doctrine that countries unable to pay their debts were moral cowards. America was a country hypocritical enough to outlaw war as an instrument of national policy and to refuse to enforce the policy—an ambiguity Senator Borah dryly characterized as "an international kiss."

America was not only these things, it was the Twenties—the age of Babbitt and the speakeasy, the unmasking of the Harding scandals, the attacks of Mencken on democracy as a spiritual fraud, the hard, glittering, get-tough-with-life-and-enjoy-yourself America of the jazz age. If the leaders of European thought came here, as they did, either to seek that sustenance of the soul they could not find among the frightened men of the Old World or to estimate for themselves the nature of the decline and fall of American faith in life, they

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—From the painting by T. E. Stephens.

My Current Reading

Robert P. Patterson, lawyer, former Secretary of War, and at present chairman of the executive committee for the Marshall Plan to Aid European Recovery, has sent us the following list of books which, as he writes, "I have recently read, as well as those I am now reading or plan to read as soon as I can find time":

SPEAKING FRANKLY, *by James F. Byrnes (Harper)*

WAR AS I KNEW IT, *by George S. Patton (Houghton Mifflin)*

LUCKY FORWARD, *by Robert S. Allen (Vanguard)*

LEE'S LIEUTENANTS, *by Douglas Southall Freeman (Scribner's)*

THIS IS PEARL! *by Walter Millis (Morrow)*

LINCOLN'S WAR CABINET, *by Burton J. Hendrick (Little, Brown)*

BLEAK HOUSE *(fourth or fifth rereading), by Charles Dickens*

TALE OF TWO CITIES *(also fourth or fifth rereading), by Charles Dickens*

KIDNAPPED *(Also fourth or fifth rereading), by Robert Louis Stevenson*

found, indeed, here and there, in the universities, in the publishing world, among the churches, in the field of art, the brave, gentle, and believing spirits they had come to find, but these were few, and travelers were compelled to return home, sadly or savagely, to report that Babbitt was a true picture, that the American dream had, indeed, eventuated in President Coolidge's snarl: "They hired the money, didn't they?" and that, so far as Europe was concerned, the United States could not rise to the height of its great argument but would continue to operate like another European power on the low ground of financial pressure, military fear, and economic cowardice. The burning word that should have been said was not spoken. Europe sank deeper and deeper into despair.

When it was too late, when Mussolini had long been established in Rome, and Hitler had seized Germany, and the Spanish Republicans had been broken in Madrid, "practical" men in the State Department and elsewhere discovered that Fascism was not an economic system but a spiritual force. Because America had not spoken, the bravest act of a mediocre prime minister was at least to utter the phrase "peace in our time." When it was later still, a dreamer named Franklin Roosevelt told his fellow countrymen that they had nothing to fear but fear itself—and suddenly, it was so, because economic relations, like political relations, are simply the outward and visible form of trust, of that confidence which permits one man to accept the promise of another as an act, and to take the token for the deed. The United States, deep in the mire into which "practical" men had dragged it, suddenly discovered—as it were, overnight—that this simple phrase, this luminous expression of spiritual fearlessness, was the beginning of "recovery." But recovery was recovery of lost belief before it became the recovery of man's manufacturing and banking capacities.

War degrades. Military machines can be held together only by mutual trust, but there never was a military machine since the world began in which that trust did not lessen as war developed its incompetence, selfishness, greed, brutality, disgust, and, above all, loneliness. If loneliness is the deepest source of strength in souls experienced enough to understand it, for lesser men it is anarchic and disruptive as they face not so much death as the degradation of a merely physical force. Cynicism mounts. Victory, instead of restoring humility, merely turns loose, in place of the dogs of war, the vultures of peace. The brave phrase lost force because there was no one to renew it.

Once more, then, the vultures of peace are loose in America. "Practical" men are once more in control. The United States is afraid, and Europe knows it. But what strikes fear into us is not so much Russia as ourselves. Do we believe in man? Do we have confidence in men? Do we display that unfathomable calm within, which the ancient Roman, the Christian martyr, the aristocratic victim of the guillotine occasionally displayed? Do we really believe in the United States ourselves? And if we do, why do we protect ourselves like timid children against Communism, against radicalism, against the Negro, against the Jew, against thought, against criticism, against social action, against God knows what? Are we, too, infected by that malady of the century, a paralysis of the soul?

It sometimes appears that the only man who truly believed in Christianity was not a Christian. This man died the other day in India, victim of the Occidental program that the way to end an idea is to shoot it. The dreadful irony of Gandhi's death is that the Christian world, including the United States, instinctively recognized that this wraithlike embodiment of a profoundly Christian hope in man, himself a Hindu, was the only practical check on violence the twentieth century had invented. We do not intend to follow so noble a leader. The irony of our pretensions to religion and democracy is underlined by the cosmic disharmony of a Nobel Prize awarded to American Quakers while American arms, ammunition, and officers are shipped in vessel after vessel to Turkey and Greece. To Europe, therefore, American belief in the soul presents itself as a consignment of machine guns in the best Bismarkian manner. The greatest American of the twentieth century may prove to be a Hindu who held no office whatever.

EVERYWHERE, to the sensitive European, the policy or impolicy of the United States displays the same corruption of the spirit he is familiar with in European chancelleries, but which, he vaguely hoped, had not yet sickened the United States. An American proconsul, who allows himself to be annoyed by newspaper correspondents, rules Japan as Roman proconsuls ruled Sicily, Asia, Egypt. American Christianity cannot consistently keep Palestine a Moslem country unless all medieval Christianity was wrong, but we, blandly asking ourselves why we should be our brother's keeper, will partition at Lake Success and deny its implementation in Jerusalem. We will the Marshall plan, and haggle over the dollars and cents involved, in the best manner of the storied Jewish moneylender we pride ourselves we are not. The profound disharmonies between letter and spirit, aim and act, have lost us the friendship of that Europe which alone counts, the Europe of the soul. The proof lies in the bewilderment expressed in letters from abroad, written by men and women groping for understanding, who make no consistent meaning out of policy that expresses democratic belief in man and acts from suspicion of men, that proclaims republican virtue as radiant with hope and then repeats, step by step, every self-seeking, "practical" measure of defense, of

(*Continued on page* 24)

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Fiction. *The most significant of this week's crop of novels is Thornton Wilder's historical fantasia on Caesar and Rome almost 2,000 years ago. It is the first memorable novel dealing with the gigantic figures of the Roman Empire since Robert Graves's "I, Claudius," and "Claudius, the God." If Rome has of late been neglected by writers, so has Ireland, where time seems to stand still. Frank O'Connor's short stories about the tribulations of Irish lovers are worthy of his reputation as Erin's greatest story writer. The reader will discover in "The Common Cord" the miseries of living on an island where nobody keeps a secret. There is, for a change, a story about a completely happy marriage by the veteran novelist Mary Roberts Rinehart, and a college novel in which anti-Semitism rears its unacademic head. For the next addition to best-seller lists we nominate Truman Capote's much discussed "Other Voices, Other Rooms." It is reported to have been selling more than 700 copies a day.*

Caesar's Last Months

THE IDES OF MARCH. By Thornton Wilder. New York: Harper & Bros. 1948. 246 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

MR. THORNTON WILDER is resolutely unfashionable. In a day when the distinction between great books and large books has become somewhat blurred, he writes a small book on a large, indeed a great subject—the last months of Caesar; and he writes it to please himself, with no concessions to make it easy for the reader. His publishers call it a novel; he calls it a fantasia, which is perhaps a better term for a book which frankly displaces one historical event by seventeen years, and keeps a number of historical characters alive long after the date of their death, for the author's convenience. But Mr. Wilder's fantasies on the stage have proved comprehensible and satisfying to many people; and so will this one to those who master its complex chronology, even though it may bear only a limited resemblance to what actually happened in Rome in the few months before the 15th of March, 44 B.C.

What interests Mr. Wilder is the feel of Rome, what people were talking and thinking about. He reproduces ancient Rome almost as convincingly as he once did modern Rome; and the thing they were mostly talking about, the mind of Caesar. It was a pragmatist, an instrumentalist mind, as Mr. Wilder pictures it from a dozen angles, inside and out. Caesar himself writes to his closest friend: "Life has no meaning save that which we may confer on it. We are not in relationship with anything until we have enwrapped it in a meaning, nor do we know for certainty what that meaning is until we have labored to impress it on the object." Caesar's Greek physician adds his testimony. "The mind of Caesar is the reverse of most men's. It rejoices in committing itself. It is as though he felt his mind to be operating only when it is interlocking itself with significant consequences." In another field, Cicero recalls that

> through the twenty most critical years of his life Caesar was penniless—spendthrift without income, lavish with another's gold. Caesar could never conceive of money when it was at rest. He could never think of it as a safeguard against the future, or as a thing of ostentation. For Caesar money is money only at the moment of its doing something.

As for his love life (he had plenty of it even if less than rumor reported) the retired actress Cytheris remarks:

> Caesar is a teacher; it is a sort of fury in him. He can only love where he can instruct. Of these young girls he marries he asks only what Pygmalion asked of the marble. . . . Caesar's other bride is Rome. To both he is a bad husband, but from an excess of conjugal love.

Here is the portrait of a very remarkable man, which is not much out of line with what is known of Julius Caesar. What the pedantic literalist does find somewhat out of line is the background, and the subsidiary characters. Mr. Wilder is candid about the liberties he has taken with chronology; but he is writing about real people and real happenings, some of which might have happened quite differently if—for instance—Clodius Pulcher had remained alive to lead

THE AUTHOR: Thornton Niven Wilder wrote his first plays at Yale, and his first novels—"The Cabala" and Pulitzer-Prized "The Bridge of San Luis Rey"—while teaching French at Lawrenceville School (N. J.) from 1921-28. He was globally educated, shunting from Madison, Wis. (b. 1897), to missionary school in China, secondary R's in California, college at Oberlin, archeology at the American Academy at Rome. Between 1930, when "The Woman of Andros" was published, and 1936—indulging semi-annual leisure from English courses he gave at the University of Chicago—he lectured, got out his second play collection and the controversial "Heaven's My Destination." With that he called a fifteen years' fiction recess to concentrate on drama, and was twice more laureled by the Pulitzer Committee ("Our Town" and "The Skin of Our Teeth"). He wrote Hollywood scripts, went to South America in '41 for the State Department, courted Britain for us the same year while a P.E.N. Congress delegate. During World War I he'd been a Coast Artillery corporal; in No. II he was AAF lieutenant colonel in Intelligence. Discharged in 1945 with a Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Order of the British Empire, and altered views, he dished a half-finished play and wrote "The Ides of March." He's a paradox, who, having always disdained writing for profit or critics' pleasure, won fame and tolerable fortune. He's an introvert with four tongues at his beck whose nirvana is the New Haven Public Library's dramatic literature on France, Germany, Italy, and Spain (particularly Lope de Vega). An extrovert whose paradise is performing the Stage Manager role in "Our Town." He loves music, knows it well, composes it. He understands "Finnegans Wake." Now, after blessing Paris and London rehearsals of "The Skin of Our Teeth," he has resumed a quiet, bachelor life with his sister, novelist Isabel Wilder, while plotting a new play. As usual, any snarls will probably be untangled with a long walk or a brisk game of solitaire.—R. G.

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his goon squads for seven years longer. Cleopatra was in Rome in those last months; Mr. Wilder has Caesar laughing off her Hellenistic theories of the divinity of the ruler; other people think he didn't laugh them off, and might have lasted longer if he had. Caesar, in this book, decides that Brutus and Cato hated him because they were afraid to take chances with life, as he did—"stern, joyless men crying, be joyful as we are joyful, be free as we are free." That was part, but only the smaller part, of Brutus and Cato; they were prigs and doctrinaires but they were also class-conscious members of an almost uniquely stupid and greedy aristocracy, which hated Caesar because he did the job which it claimed as its prerogative, but was unable or unwilling to do.

But the widest divergence from the accepted record is in the case of Catullus. Mr. Wilder keeps him alive almost ten years after the traditional date of his death—alive, still in love with Clodia, admired and envied by Caesar; but hating Caesar and conducting an ineffective underground propaganda against him. Here Mr. Wilder is apparently thinking of one of the men to whom his book is dedicated—Lauro de Bosis, poet and anti-Fascist propagandist of the Twenties, who made a deep impression on many people (though not on Mussolini). Well, we know that Caesar could appreciate, and perhaps envy, a first-rate poet; we know he made some gestures of friendliness to Catullus, which to some extent changed Catullus's tune. But Catullus's attacks on him hardly seem to come from a pure flame of principle; nothing in Catullus's writings indicates that he was capable of thought; he abused Caesar because it was the fashion, in the company he kept in Rome; only, being Catullus, he could abuse him more effectively.

However, Mr. Wilder does not claim to be writing history; he does successfully the novelist's job of creating characters consistent with themselves and with their setting. And few readers will be disturbed by the fact that these characters bear the names of historical personalities who in some cases were quite different.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 725)

SIMEON STRUNSKY:
TWO CAME TO TOWN

With some peoples the pendulum swings furiously from despotism to anarchy and back again to serfdom and stagnation. With the American people . . . the length of the arc is kept within bounds by the gravitational pull of freedom.

Villainy on the Campus

THE PROFESSOR'S UMBRELLA. By Mary Jane Ward. New York: Random House. 1948. 313 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

THE UNIVERSITY novel is a unique and on the whole disappointing part of American fiction—a genre to which no other literature has quite the analogue. It is usually an indictment, which retains such old-fashioned stereotypes as the villain (or villains) and the hero and heroine. Villainy is commonly committed by the "administration" against our young hero, who is superior as a teacher to his fellows, broader in his view of human life than the dean, and far, far above the coarse world of commercialism inhabited by the president, who is invariably a Stinker. Villainy is of course malignant, but it is often visible as a queer kind of motiveless malignancy; *i.e.*, since the president and the dean are Wicked Men, it is important that they shall act wickedly. The hero is bounced from his job, when, despite the loyal enthusiasm of students, he shakes the dust of the academy off his coat and goes out, hand in hand with the heroine, into a brave new world. In sum, the university novel is at about the same stage of development as was the novel of political reform in the 1900's and exhibits the same simple techniques.

Miss Ward's "The Professor's Umbrella" is a university novel which differs from others of its kind chiefly in that the dialogue is more skilfully written than is customary in this form. Otherwise all the familiar elements of the pattern are present. Gregory Kitner is a Jewish teacher of composition, whose presence in a gentile club arouses the ire of the president and dean, who thereupon bring against him a charge of misconduct with a coed (the coed disappears from the book so swiftly the reader is hard put to it to keep the plot clear) and incontinently drop him from the faculty.

But isn't it about time that writers of fiction recognize a rich field in the university world—a field not to be harvested by the simple procedure of indictment? Of course there are cowardly deans and tyrannous presidents, and naturally there are self-seeking members of the faculty. Gallant youth is occasionally sacrificed on the altars of respectability. But by and large academic life in this country does not resemble these muckracking caricatures. What is needed, it seems to me, is a wiser and more mature approach. When Trollope created Barchester, he did not go at his problem on the naïve hero-villain plane. Even Mrs. Proudie is human, and even the heroic Rev. Mr. Crawley, to whose vindication "The Last Chronicle of Barset" is devoted, is an erring, and often a disagreeable, human being. But the ripe wisdom of Trollope saw in Barchester a vast exhibition of the human comedy; and I strongly suspect that the right novelist going at university life in the same spirit will discover that only by a similar method can he dramatize the subtle (and often comic) relationships among the rather complicated set of human beings who constitute our universities.

Love in Ireland

THE COMMON CHORD: Stories and Tales. By Frank O'Connor. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1948. 278 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by VIVIAN MERCIER

FRANK O'CONNOR is Ireland's greatest storyteller, recapturing in the written word all the flavor of the Gaelic oral tradition. No reviewer can hope to convey the vocal inflection, the "tone of voice," the turn of phrase in these stories without lengthy quotation. In each one the reader is aware not only of the narrator, but of his sympathetic audience. Sometimes the storyteller will address the unseen listener directly, calling him "John Joe" or some such name, and appealing to a whole body of assumptions that they and other Irishmen hold in common. If the reader does not grasp those assumptions at first, he will before he is through, because all twelve stories deal with a single theme—love—and between them they build up a wholly alien and Irish concept of the tender passion.

I remember an early story of O'Connor's which ends, "And that is why there are no Irish detective stories." "The Common Chord" might be summed up in the phrase, "And that is why there are no Irish love stories." The great enemy of passion in Ireland is lack of privacy. Most of these stories are set in one particular small town, but basically the whole of Ireland is one long Main Street, where everybody knows everybody else's business. The secret understanding between two lovers becomes, first a tasty bit of gossip, then a byword and a joke. Nothing is more inimical to real passion than laughter—and Irish people have a neurotic hatred of being laughed at.

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Let us suppose that a miracle happens, and that the lovers manage to hide their guilty joy from the neighbors. Since they are Catholics, one or the other will finally reveal the truth to a priest in confession, and the priest will feel it his duty to intervene. The neighbors see him at work, and the secret is out. Love is either regularized by matrimony or, if that is not possible, is thwarted by the force of public opinion. Some of the stories deal with the by-products of such thwarting—the illegitimate children farmed out in country cottages, the loveless marriages entered into by frustrated Romeos and Juliets.

One must always keep in mind that marriage in Ireland is not a matter for the individual alone, but for society. Its chief end is the raising of children to inherit the family name and the family farm or shop. The tradition of the "made match" is still a living thing, and a property settlement, with all its attendant bargaining, is a necessary accompaniment of even a "love match."

Love might well be a barren theme for a storyteller in these circumstances, but love will find a way, and the struggles of this basic urge to find an outlet among countless obstacles produce complications enough for a dozen books of short stories. In the longest and most endearing of O'Connor's tales, "The Holy Door," a shopkeeper who believes in love as few Irishmen do finally achieves happiness in his second marriage—but not until the neighbors have done their worst.

What the American reader may delight in most is the utter unselfconsciousness of Frank O'Connor's lovers. They are usually quite unaware that they are in love or that anybody has ever done what they are doing before. When the Church speaks of their sin, they are puzzled, because they know sin only in the abstract. How can they themselves be sinning? Sure, aren't they only ordinary, decent people the same as anybody else? They can never become sophisticated about sex, because they never lose their sense of wonder.

Some of these stories may seem too good to be true, as though O'Connor had let his imagination betray him into telling a mere tall tale. But I don't think that is a fair criticism. Fiction *is* fiction, after all, and the truth about Love in Ireland will not always bear telling. Better too good to be true than too true to be good.

In Ireland, Vivian Mercier wrote a weekly column for the Church of Ireland Gazette *and was on the editorial staff of* The Bell. *He now teaches literature at Bennington College.*

A Good Marriage

A LIGHT IN THE WINDOW. By Mary Roberts Rinehart. New York: Rinehart & Co. 1948. 348 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by SARA HENDERSON HAY

"A SUCCESSFUL marriage," said Matthew Wayne to his daughter-in-law Ricky, "doesn't just happen. It is made." Mary Roberts Rinehart's latest novel, "A Light in the Window," is not only the story of Courtney's and Fredericka's marriage and the ingredients which made and kept it good, although this is its central theme, but the story of three generations of the Wayne family and what happened to them during the years from 1919 to 1945, from the end of one war, when young Court came home from two years in Europe to a wife he barely knew, to the end of another war, when his son, Jeff, did the same. It is a long and engrossing chronicle of events and people, against a background of American life in the tumultuous Twenties and Thirties, a background of national drama, with its confusions, accomplishments, follies, scandals, triumphs, and disasters, a time not so much of peace as a breathing spell between two wars, a period of changing values and concepts, of conservatism against liberalism, of old orders giving place to new. The Wayne family was not the average American family of modest circumstances and position. Matthew was the founder and head of a famous publishing house and they were both wealthy and influential, but the things that happened to them were in essence universal; they faced the personal problems which all human beings face, problems of human relationships, of integrity, of tolerance and understanding, of compromise and tragedy and triumph.

They are skilfully portrayed: Matthew Wayne, who fought stoutly to maintain the policies of conservatism against a rising tide of what he considered radicalism and sensationalism; Elizabeth, his wife, ambitious, arrogant, vain, and self-willed, whom time and illness mellowed but did not defeat; Courtney Wayne, their son, who came back from Germany with a secret which could not be kept from his young wife and which nearly destroyed their marriage, and Fredericka, tortured and baffled by the wall of strangeness between herself and her husband. The years brought disillusion and doubt to shake the bulwarks of their love for each other, and they learned the hard way that marriage and love itself are made up of all sorts of things besides romantic passion, that there are such ingredients as faith, charity, pride, endurance, even obligation and expedience and practicality. Sometimes blindly, sometimes almost instinctively, they maintained the things that meant most to them both. And they made it a good marriage.

—*Hal Phyfe.*

"Mary Roberts Rinehart has written with wisdom and understanding sympathy."

Mrs. Rinehart has written with wisdom and understanding sympathy of a marriage which, though some of its circumstances were extreme and unusual, reflects problems which beset most husbands and wives in greater or lesser degree. Her realism is uncompromising and she preaches no sermons; Court and Rickey are real people and the safety and happiness which they find are neither sentimentalized nor made sanctimonious. There is no goody-goody moral, but there is an underlying premise which is sound and comforting and inspirational in the best and truest sense.

There are many other memorable characters in the book, whose subsidiary stories are woven into the main pattern—Matthews's business associates, the authors he deals with, his sister Roberta, widow of an Englishman killed in the first war, who rejects the safety of her brother's home and goes back to the England which in 1943 and '44 knew its blackest hours, to die under the ruins of her bombed house; Courtney's and Rickey's two children, growing up, going to war, making wartime marriages; Jeff's wife, Audrey, as young, as gauche, as troubled, waiting in her parents-in-law's house for Jeff to come back as Rickey herself had been, in Matthew's and Elizabeth's house, in 1919.

"A Light in the Window" is a fine and moving story of believable

(*Continued on page* 28)

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Personal History.

Frances Winwar, biographer of Oscar Wilde, George Sand, Whitman, the Pre-Raphaelites, and the Romantic poets of England, now turns, in her latest book, to Joan of Arc. The Maid of Orleans was not only a warrior-saint but a nationalist too: her martial efforts helped to end the Hundred Years' War against England with a new sense of French national feeling, and shortly thereafter both nations began exploring the New World. The first skirting of the coast of North America sixty-six years after the martyrdom of Joan heralded a centuries-long struggle for possession of the new continent, which culminated in the epic contest between France and England. Francis Parkman has never been surpassed in telling that story. His journals, reviewed below, have been edited by Mason Wade, the author of a biography of Parkman which was published in 1942.

Joan and the Profligate

THE SAINT AND THE DEVIL: Joan of Arc and Gilles de Rais. By Frances Winwar. New York: Harper & Bros. 1948. 303 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by ROBERT PICK

WHEN after much wavering the Dauphin yielded to the entreaties of Joan of Arc and the command of her Voices, and sent her on her hazardous road, he entrusted her to three captains: the *beau duc* Alençon, the Gascon condottiere La Hire, and Gilles de Rais, one of the most brilliant, most cultured, and wealthiest young noblemen of France's harassed realm. Gilles gave to Joan what military advice she would take from him in the field. He rushed to her aid when "a bolt from an English arbelast struck her," and throughout the campaign fought so valiantly on her side that Charles, distributing honors after his coronation at Rheims, bestowed a marshal's baton on him. Gilles is also said not to have shared the court's shameful unconcern about Joan's captivity, and even to have made an unsuccessful sally against the walls of Rouen to deliver her from her jailors. These are the meager facts of what the curious blurb of Miss Winwar's present book calls a "dramatic relationship."

Readers of her previous work need not be told that she doesn't write romance. She is a conscientious researcher with a definite sense of both the period and its spirit, and writes an admirable style. Though she refrains from cluttering her pages with footnotes, the reader feels he is on solid historical ground. He will accept as a justifiable flight of imagination such occasional conjectures as the author's wondering what Gilles, the voluptuary, felt at the sight of Joan as her "wound forced her to bare her breast before the chaplain, before the rough soldiers."

In fact, the relationship of these two figures is of another, a higher order than suggested by the blurb. The two trials that within a decade put to death the virgin saint-to-be and the profligate, debt-ridden *bête de luxure*, necromancer, Satanist, and sadist monster which Joan's gallant companion-in-arms grew to be, were the two foremost *causes célèbres* of the fifteenth century. Joan, as well as Gilles, came into conflict with the decisive spiritual forces of her time.

The proceedings against Gilles, precipitated by the rapacity of the Duke of Brittany, were carried on by the ecclesiastical court with less legality than was the action against the Maid. The prime mover in Joan's trial, the collaborationist bishop Cauchon, was a stickler for lawfulness.

Gilles was as penitent a defendant as any ecclesiastical court could wish for. What broke his pride and his self-control was not the discovery of his hundred and eighty-odd murderous sex crimes, but the realization that by these Satan-inspired outrages he had committed heresy, and the sentence of excommunication could be passed on him. He knew that the secular arm could not but condemn him to death. But he begged for his reincorporation into the Church, and the eloquence of his confession—a grisly document even for us contemporaries of Nuremberg — was enhanced by the ardor of that desire.

Joan, even when told that she had committed heresy, did not repent. She insisted that she was responsible to God alone, and, except for some seconds of obvious misunderstanding, would not submit to the Church Militant. Her present biographer, in dealing with one of the most delicate points of Joan's tragedy, strikes a very convincing balance between Cauchon the ambitious politician who knew that her subsequent (and less than half-hearted) abjuration—which for a while spared her the horrible death—left the English dissatisfied, and Cauchon the zealous churchman who may well have been waiting for the heretic's relapse, "the unforgivable crime in the eyes of the Inquisition." Sixteen years earlier Hus had defied the Church Militant in words more learned than the Voices had given to the Maid.

Miss Winwar does not explicitly stress that Reformation spark in Saint Joan. But the modernism of her heresy shines through the vellum of her pious visions. Nor does the author make any spectacular attempts at rationalizing the voices of the *Pucelle* and the miracles she wrought. Only in referring to her as a "herald of the modern world"—that is, as a forerunner of the idea of nationalism—does Miss Winwar shed her reserve:

> So died Joan, daughter of the people. . . . She had shaken the entire feudal age with her concept of France as a national entity. . . . The idea conquered. It conquered more than the English. It conquered the world.
>
> So died Joan, martyr and patriot, for a vision so exalted that in her humbleness she had not dared to claim it for her own.

This is the significant juxtaposition in this rich and truly engrossing study. Gilles de Rais was in his every fiber tied to the medieval hierarchy of the universe and its formalism. Seen in the perspective of history. this feudal lord and subtle lover of the arts was more naïve than the illiterate peasant girl who merely listened to her Voices.

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America Through Brahmin Glasses

THE JOURNALS OF FRANCIS PARKMAN. Edited by Mason Wade. New York: Harper & Bros. 1947. 718 pp. 2 vols. $10.

Reviewed by JOHN LYDENBERG

PROBABLY the greatest American historian, Francis Parkman is read by both professional historians and by laymen. His seven-volume history of "France and England in America," published between 1865 and 1892, remains the definitive history of the long conflict for domination of North America, unsurpassed for accuracy, scope, and dramatic sweep; and it is at the same time one of the high points in American prose writings.

Similarly, his journals, recently rediscovered after almost forty years, will be read with delight by historians and the general reader. The later journals—curt, cryptic notes on sources, interviews, and facts to be incorporated in his histories—are of solely technical interest for the information they contain about Parkman's methods of research and composition. But the earlier ones, making up by far the larger part, are careful descriptions of summer travels from 1841 through 1846, into the then wild mountains of New England, into Canada, New York State, and the Old Northwest, including a narrative of his European tour in 1843-44, and the original notes made during his historic months on the Oregon and Santa Fe trails—all written before he was twenty-three. They form a book of travel and adventure that would make exciting reading if their author were otherwise quite unknown. They are now made available in two handsomely printed and illustrated volumes, superbly edited by Mason Wade.

Parkman was a Puritan and a romantic. From his first college days he pushed himself so hard physically that he wrecked his already precarious health, and after twenty-five his life was a continuous battle against blindness, insomnia, and complete nervous breakdown. But he wouldn't give in; against almost insuperable odds he slowly and painfully wrote the histories he had determined to write when he was only a sophomore at Harvard. Driven on by his romantic conception of the clashes between three civilizations in the uncharted American forests, of men dwarfed by primeval nature, and of a few great individuals indomitably facing their natural and human enemies, he achieved in the world of letters the success that many of his Puritan contemporaries fought to attain in the world of business.

Though the journals tell little about his poor health, they reveal his Puritanism and romanticism. They also point up the difference between the Puritanism of the Boston Brahmins and the introspective, philosophical strain that flowered in the Concord of Emerson, Thoreau, and Hawthorne. If the evidence of the journals is conclusive, Parkman never worried about the meaning of life, never felt any close sympathy for the people he encountered, was scarcely aware of the social developments of his time. He hated the mill towns because their filth muddied the rivers and their slums spoiled the natural beauties, not because they represented human sacrifices or signified a social and economic revolution. While Thoreau traveled the shores of Walden Pond to reach an understanding of man's fundamental nature, Parkman journeyed through the White Mountains and across the High Plains to test his physical endurance and to obtain descriptive passages for his histories.

His reactions to the people he met in his travels clearly show his aristocratic bias. Although he admired the simplicity and strength of a few independent White Mountain frontiersmen and a few hunters of the Plains, he usually regarded his fellow Americans through frosty Brahmin glasses, seeing the less favored as "brutish clods." "Is it not true," he asks, "that the lower you descend in education and social position, the more vicious men become?" The Sioux, with whom he lived for several weeks, were immoral and lazy. Negroes show nothing but "careless, thoughtless enjoyment. Is it not safe to conclude them to be an inferior race?"

The passages suggesting Parkman's social and personal philosophy make up not five per cent of the journals. The rest of the travel records are straight narration and description, conveying admirably the beauties of the mountains and the youthful zest for hardships and novel experiences. And they are written in a style so colorful and yet precise that when after a quarter of a century Parkman was again well enough to start on his great histories he could incorporate almost verbatim passages from journals he had started while a college undergraduate.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 244

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 244 will be found in the next issue.

NEGR DREDJR LBR NE SEFQ

ES XJJ-JHMZ OULO OURW

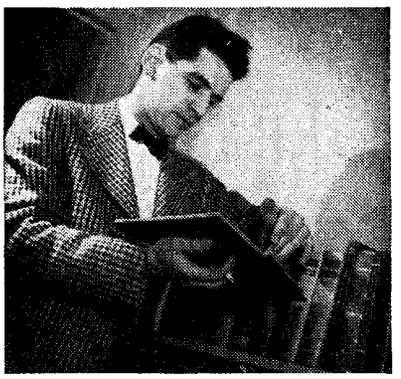
BHF ULJSVLW OE GRRO XO.

—Q.V. YRBBEJQ.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 243

Men are generally more careful of the breed of their horses and dogs than of their own children.

W. PENN



—*Erich Kastan.*

My Current Reading

Leonard Bernstein, already an outstanding conductor at thirty-three, regularly leads the New York City Symphony and has appeared as guest conductor at the head of the major orchestras of the world. Bernstein is also a fine pianist, and a versatile composer not only of classical music like his "Jeremiah Symphony" but of lighter ballets and musical comedies such as "Fancy Free" and "On the Town."

THE ANATOMY OF PEACE, *by Emery Reeves (Harper).*

MAN AGAINST MYTH, *by Barrows Dunham (Little, Brown)*

FOUR QUARTETS *(rereading), by T. S. Eliot (Harcourt, Brace)*

EUROPEAN WITNESS, *by Stephen Spender (Reynal & Hitchcock)*

WHAT AM I DOING HERE? *by Abner Dean (Simon & Schuster)*

THE CARDINAL'S MISTRESS, *by Benito Mussolini (Boni)*

NUREMBERG DIARY, *by G. M. Gilbert (Farrar, Straus)*

RIMBAUD, *by Wallace Fowlie (New Directions)*

THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA, *by Franz Kafka (Schocken Books)*

PALE HORSE, PALE RIDER, *by Katherine Ann Porter (Harcourt, Brace)*

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The Saturday Review of Literature

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Bookmarks

WE LIVE in a fantastic world —a world in which we are besought to return empty milk bottles, and in which we render ourselves liable to prosecution if we reuse empty whiskey bottles. Empty books, unfortunately, are both non-reusable and non-returnable.

* * *

Many contemporary books which are the product of competent, sometimes brilliant, scholarship, with every statement documented to the hilt, manifest a complete disregard for the documentation of illustrations. "From an old print" is about as valuable an assignation of a pictorial source as "from an old book" would be of a textual. Who drew or painted the illustration? Who engraved it? Where did it first appear, and when, when, when?

* * *

All honor to Patrick White, author of "The Aunt's Story." Preceding the text of his novel is a schedule of errata. There are fourteen of them, none of them critical, perhaps, save in the eyes of the author—for *billet-doux* read *billets-doux*, for *del' Isola* (twice) read *dell' Isola*. Here is a man who takes care.

* * *

It will do an author no harm, and it may do his readers a lot of good, if he can prevail on a friend to read his manuscript aloud to him before anybody else has a chance at it. English is a tricky language, crowded with verbs and adjectives that enjoy masquerading as nouns, nouns that like to play at being verbs, prepositions that may be either yeomen at their proper job of introducing phrases or the tag ends of verbs, demonstrative pronouns that delight in switching to relative without warning. It is easy for the writer himself occasionally to miss one or two of these thoroughly idiomatic *double entendres*. They rarely confuse the sense permanently and beyond repair, but they do thwart the engrossed reader, set him on his heels for a moment that is an eternity, and send him back to reread the confusing sentence — and illusion is wrecked and suspense hamstrung. The reading-aloud treatment, administered by someone unfamiliar with the manuscript, should serve to float these little annoyances to the surface, where they can be skimmed off.

* * *

Our hat is off, even in the middle of a hard winter, to any skilled specialist in the technique of research who can consult the file of an old newspaper without being shunted off the main line of his investigation onto one of the enticing spurs of adjacent columns—the chronicles of old, forgotten, far-off things that leap back to life from the yellowing pulp (or, in the instance of older journals, from the still-white rag). Our expert is investigating, let us say, the origin of the Federal Reserve System, and for the moment is back in the Taft-Wilson era. He opens the bound file and confronts

ALL WOMEN ARE
LIARS, DECLARES
EXPERT ON SEX

Our investigator may have sufficient self-control to leave the story unread. But now his eye lights on

GIRL STEALS
$250 AND BUYS
WILLOW PLUME

What in heaven's name is a willow plume, and why should it cost $250? It isn't important enough to look up—our expert has no business looking it up—but the willow plume, unless his mind is beautifully compartmented, will keep flicking at his brain. And he must be constructed of the sternest stuff indeed to be able to detour around

WOMAN DEAN'S
REMARK TO CO-ED
COSTS HER $2,500

—the price of ten willow plumes.

These are genuine, not manufactured examples. They were not what we set out to look for, either. The really proficient investigator is able to ignore them. But oh, the fascinating things he misses!

* * *

Is there any experience more annoying than to be referred, by the index of a book, to page 349, and then to find that on page 349 there is absolutely nothing having anything to do with what you are looking for?

* * *

Today's hint for budding novelists is from Michael Sadleir's "Forlorn Sunset": "Coincidences . . . are so much commoner in real life than in fiction that novelists are advised to avoid them, lest their stories lose the glamor of impossibility and read as drably as fact."

* * *

In drawing deserved attention to flaws of dialect in a recent novel of the American Revolution, Lewis Gannett noted in the *New York Herald Tribune*: "'At long last' was not the King's English when George III sat on the throne." Nor, in our book, was it the King's English when Edward VIII got off the throne, despite the fact that that sovereign's announcement of his abdication opened with the same abominable locution.

J. T. W.

Simeon Strunsky

THE LITERARY scene and the wider world lost in Simeon Strunsky, who died last week, one of those rare individuals in whom brilliance of mind added lustre to character. In him there was a happy union of wisdom and nobility, a constant and searching effort to arrive at truth combined with a passionate and compassionate concern for the humanity which in the later years of his life he saw floundering in a tragic morass of doubts and deceptions. He was born in Russia, but his Americanism was of the sort that never yielded a jot of its confidence that democracy, whatever its shortcomings, was the best that men had been able to evolve in the way of government and that in peace as in war it held the power to triumph over apparently insuperable difficulties. A patient man in his personal relations, he was patient also in his attitude toward public questions, and there as in his private life humor always seasoned his outlook. It was true of him to a remarkable degree that the style was the man, for his writing was like himself percipient, sympathetic, and mellow. He lived in warring times but his ways were the ways of gentleness. Of him, it could with truth be said, as was said long ago of an earlier contributor to the old *New York Evening Post* he served so loyally and well, that none knew him but to love him, nor named him but to praise. He is gone, but he will live in the hearts of those who were privileged to know him.

A. L.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Apex of Morality

SIR: *SRL* is much to be applauded for its consistent efforts to present controversial topics fairly. For no other reason could you have printed so damnable, so dangerous, and so mystical an utterance as that of Kelly James Jan. 31. He said in effect that the Jews' non-acceptance of the Christian theology is responsible for the ills of civilization. He supports the medieval doctrine that only through a particular form or religion can the higher morality of mankind be arrived at. I prefer to believe that no one religion is the "right" one and that Judaism as well as Christianity leads to the apex of morality.

AARON BLOCK.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

Reading and Reading

SIR: Our "current reading" includes the following:

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, complete works
A LA RECHERCHE DU TEMPES PERDU, *by Proust*
THE HARVARD CLASSICS
CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON, *by Kant*
COMMENTARIES, *by Blackstone*
APPLICATIONS OF THE ABSOLUTE DIFFERENTIAL CALCULUS, *by McConnell*
ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITTANICA, 14 ED.
NEUROLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ANIMAL BEHAVIOR, *by Herrick*
THE ECONOMICS OF CORPORATE ENTERPRISE, *by Buchanan*
THE BIBLE, annotated, with Commentary, Concordance, and Law

Please do not confuse these with the books we are reading this week:

THE WHISTLING HANGMAN, *by Kendrick*
DEAD FOR A DUCAT, *by Reilly*
THE CAT SCREAMS, *by Downing*
THE CORPSE WITH THE PURPLE THIGHS, *by Bagby*

DOROTHY AUSTIN,
GEORGE AUSTIN.

Birmingham, Mich.

Who's Loony Now?

SIR: In *SRL* Dec. 20 a second attack of Jung and of myself by imputation was made. I went to some pains to answer the first [*SRL* Sept. 6] —which was similar. These attacks attempt to identify Jung and persons interested in Jungian speculation with anti-Semitism and with pro-Nazism.

At the time of the first unfounded slander I went to some pains to point out its ignorance, where Jung was concerned, and its malicious foolishness in relation to myself. For I have long been a leader in the fight against anti-Semitism and I crusaded against the Nazis when most liberals were still calling such efforts "war-mongering."

My reply did not seem to stop the mean enterprise of Jung's detractors, or their one-watt tempest. May I try again? Here is the cogent fact in the matter:

The psychological theories of Carl Jung which greatly interest so many other psychologists, as well as such multitudes of intelligent laymen, were published in books long before the rise of Fascism in Europe. These concepts had nothing to do with race prejudice, or nationalism, or Fascism —which did not exist in human heads when they were evolved. They are, simply, extensions of Freud's ideas.

Hence the effort to discredit Jung's genius by dishonestly tarring him with anti-Semitism and pro-Nazism is much like lambasting Aristotelian philosophy on the grounds that Aristotle was a Ku Kluxer. It just doesn't wash. And it is too bad that the wrong-headed and irrelevant charges of people with fixed ideas continue to be printed because they tend to alienate interest from the work of a very brilliant man.

I am called "inconsistent" by these detractors. Yet all their charges are flatly belied by mere chronology, as a glance at Jung's bibliography would prove. Who's loony now?

PHILIP WYLIE.

Miami Beach, Fla.

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"That, mon Emperor, is the little village of Waterloo—a place of no importance."

"Loving Ballad"

SIR: I am collecting material relating to the "Loving Ballad" of Lord Bateman, including versions of the ballad, broadsides, plays, play-bills, etc. I would appreciate hearing from anyone possessing or knowing the location of any such versions, especially if hitherto unpublished.

MARSHALL R. ANSPACH.

Williamsport, Pa.

Biting Prayer

SIR: I would like to call attention to what I consider a very unfortunate inclusion in the issue of Jan. 24—Edwina Dodge Schaefer's "A Prayer for Today." One wonders what is the justification for the inclusion of a bitter, sarcastic commentary on American politics and economics in a magazine dedicated to reviews and appraisals of American literature.

Perhaps when the Republican Congress attempts to repeal our anti-trust laws, and perhaps when the sweat-shop returns to the scene again, it will be the duty of a leading intellectual magazine such as *The Saturday Review* to take a political stand. At least now do not let it succumb to the allure of contemporary politics, and even then, let your criticism be matured and intelligent as opposed to Miss Schaefer's biting, uncalled for prayer.

EDWIN L. WEISL, JR.

New Haven, Conn.

The Jig Is Up

SIR: "Ross Lockridge's 'Raintree County' tears the history of an American family to fragmentary pieces and reassembles it like a cross-word puzzle."—FICTION heading, *SRL* Jan. 3.

The question that we fans would ask
Is "Just how puzzled can you get?"
Assembling cross-words IS a task
But fragments make it harder yet.

Suppose we leave the tearing-up
To JIGSAW puzzlers—happy men!—
Who have no cross words flaring up
To taunt their work with critic's pen.

WIN ECKHARDT.

Clayton, Mo.

Irritations

SIR: Paul Fussell must have been hard up for something to become irritated about when he selected the phrase, "gave his life for his country" [*SRL* Dec. 20]. The last paragraph of his letter is an all-time high in bad taste.

I think Mr. Fussell would be a far happier man were he to devote a little time to cultivating good taste rather than to perfecting speech.

CECILIA B. TUOHY.

Bronx, N. Y.

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Religion. *If you believe that ideas can influence men's actions as concretely as the snowstorm that keeps you at home or the broken leg that sends you to a hospital, then you will agree with Horace Kallen that Harry Wolfson's "Philo," which he reviews below, "is an event in the history of ideas." For many signs today point to the end of a period of rationalism in thinking which began, according to Wolfson, with Spinoza. Whatever form our ideas take in the coming years will help to determine the shape of our future. Reason has today become so subtle that the line between the spirtiual and the material is blurring; there is room more than ever for religion, whether in new terms or old. . . . For a roundup of recent religious books, see elsewhere in this issue.*

Harmonizing Reason with Revelation

PHILO: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. By Harry Austryn Wolfson. Cambridge: The Harvard University Press. 1947. *2 vols. 993 pp.* $10.

Reviewed by HORACE W. KALLEN

THIS exciting book is an event in the history of ideas. Its argument deserves the most extended analysis and discussion, but the space I am allowed permits only calling attention to the main points of the author's elaborate and persuasive demonstration of his thesis.

Dr. Wolfson takes as his point of departure the familiar fact that for more than seventeen hundred years the prevailing philosophies of the Western world have owned a common character. Whether Judaist, Christian, or Moslem, whether expressed in Greek or Latin or Syriac or Arabic or Hebrew, they have built upon an identical doctrine and expressed it in very similar if not identical literary modes. Their substance and form are consequences of an effort to assimilate the philosophic teachings of the Greeks to the content of the Old Testament of the Jews, the New Testament of the Christians, and the Koran of the Moslems. These true believers undertook to harmonize reason with revelation, but with revelation as ruler and reason as subject, revelation as end and reason as instrument.

In the works of the Church fathers, in the Arabic, Jewish, and scholastic philosophies of the Middle Ages, reason is consistently treated as the handmaiden of revelation. Revelation is the word of God to man. Its vehicle is Scripture. It announces to man the authentic being of God, the origin and history of creation, man's own nature and destiny as that follows from his obedience or disobedience to God's will. Scripture alone is truth, and that which conflicts with Scripture cannot be true. Right reason never conflicts with Scripture. If on occasion reason seems to, it is because Scripture has been misread or reason has strayed. Scripture reveals, for example, that God is spirit, one and eternal, and that He created the world of nature out of the void; reason, however, cannot reconcile the created with the eternal, so that the pre-Scriptural philosophies of the Hellenistic world hold nature to be co-eternal with God, even identical with God. Scripture, again, reveals that the unique eternal spirit who is God Almighty, is free to create or not to create, to destroy or not to destroy; to interpose His grace on the workings of natural law, and to intrude His miracles into the chain of necessary causation; reason cannot reconcile divine grace with natural necessity, freedom with eternity, miracle with law and order. Scripture, once more, reveals that man's will is free to obey or not to obey the rules Almighty God gave him for his salvation; reason cannot make consistent such freedom in the creature with omnipotence in his Creator. Finally, Scripture reveals that the human soul has an immortal destiny, with which God's grace rewards those who have earned it by their obedience to God's will; reason cannot reconcile created being with immortality. For reason, whatever begins, must end. Reason is logic; its principle is consistency; it requires that conclusions shall contain nothing not already given in their premises. Revelation, per contra, uncovers conclusions not given in their premises —grace, freedom, and miracles.

Now, until Philo of Alexandra, classical philosophy had sought self-consistency and rationality. The Stoic practice of treating the lives and labors of all the gods of all the peoples as allegories for the sequences and laws of nature had been one form of the effort to establish the rationality of existence. Philo Judaeus was, however, no Greek, although Greek was the language of his community, his daily life, and his literary expression. His Bible was the Septuagint and it is not certain that he knew Hebrew. His writings give evidence, if not of the scholar's knowledge, of the educated man's awareness and appreciation of the great Greek systems of thought, and embody emulations of what he held to be their virtues. An observant Judaist, convinced beyond all question of the truth of the Torah and the superior wisdom of Moses and the prophets, he concedes nothing of the doctrine and discipline of Scriptural revelation to the philosophic reason. He employs allegory to vindicate faith, not to appease reason. He composes homilies; he produces commentaries on Scriptural passages, but he does not employ the forms of expression and discourse which prevail in the Hellenistic culture. What Philo does and how he does it initiate a set of ideas and a way of thinking that dominate the philosophy of the Western world from his day to Spinoza's.

Spinoza, in Dr. Wolfson's judgment, is the first of the moderns to challenge the seventeen-hundred-year-old tradition and to restore to reason the sovereignty and independence it had lost to revelation. The Philonic system, far from being the mere postscript to ancient Greek philosophy that the learned judge it to be, is a new and unprecedented turn in philosophic thinking, the spring and matrix of all subsequent systems till modern times.

Such, very broadly, is Dr. Wolfson's thesis. He establishes it by a detailed, almost miniscule, collation of texts and terms in the Greek, Hebrew, Latin, Syriac, and Arabic sources, with both direct and oblique references to the historic and social setting in which they occur. He does it, moreover, with a dramatic feeling and a literary style altogether unusual in a semantic undertaking of this type. The educated layman will find his Philo as intriguing as the specialist must find it challenging.

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The Hunters and The Hunted

By SACHEVERELL SITWELL

Here the youngest Sitwell defends style and *décor* as the essence of civilization, and celebrates some of the most splendid examples. Hauntingly beautiful, this is a pilgrimage through the rare and recondite in Byzantine, Gothic, French, Etruscan, Japanese art, and in nature and music. With 16 full-page illustrations. $4.00

Remembered Weather

By LEONE RICE GRELLE

This gracious poetry paints the New England scene and sings of emotions everyone knows and understands. *Wings* says this poet's work is ". . . always filled with authentic pictures and impressions and endowed with a calm loveliness." $2.50

A great modern novel . . .

By C. P. SNOW

The LIGHT and the DARK

This is a book of major importance, about a young man with a shadow on his mind. Roy Calvert moves in brilliant society, plunges into love affairs, seeks God, tries to lose himself in a cause. The women who love him try in vain to save him. This book has been hailed as a masterpiece, its author called "a Proust without the floral decorations, vivisecting his hero to the last raw filament of nerve." $3.00

Northwest Harvest

Edited by V. L. O. CHITTICK

This "regional stock-taking" is a discussion of the Northwest, its past and future and its relation to the rest of America, by some of its outstanding writers. Among them are Peter Odegard, Ernest Haycox, Stewart Holbrook, Joseph B. Harrison, Horace R. Cayton, and others. For all who are interested in regionalism, in American literature, or history. $4.00

Africa, I Presume?

By ALAN REEVE

Glamour and squalor, the beautiful and the grotesque, exotic sights, sounds, odors, appear in this book by an able artist and newspaperman who made a 20,000-mile safari through Africa. He has caught in words and drawings all the color and adventure of the Dark Continent. "Highly entertaining."—*The Cleveland Press.* $3.00

A History of *The Times*

VOLUME III—1884-1912

This fascinating volume, the third in the history of the great London newspaper, reveals the conversations, correspondence, and machinations of emperors, kings, and chancellors, leading to two World Wars. $6.50

The Future of the American Jew

By MORDECAI M. KAPLAN

A philosophy for Jewish life in the contemporary world, discussing how Israel may justify its existence as a separate group and still contribute to the common good of society. "—a master work of religious thought . . ."—Joshua Loth Liebman. $6.00

The Russian Idea

By NICOLAS BERDYAEV

Berdyaev, whose name has been linked with Kierkegaard's, analyzes the thinking of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Bakunin, Belinsky, and many others, and helps make clear the true Russia, the Russian Church, and the soul of the Russian peoples. $2.75

MACMILLAN

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Saki to Saroyan

THE QUESTING SPIRIT: Religion in the Literature of Our Time. Edited by Halford E. Luccock and Frances Brentano. New York: Coward-McCann, Inc. 1947. 717 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by WILLIAM S. LYNCH

NOW THAT we are hearing so much about affirmations it is inevitable that we should have an anthology of this type—"400 short stories, poems, plays, and affirmations, 700 pages from outstanding American and English authors, chosen to provide inspiration, reflection, and enjoyment for readers of every age and every taste." Dr. Luccock, a professor at the Yale Divinity School, and Frances Brentano, critic and writer, have teamed up to assemble selections from present-day reading which deal with religion and which, they feel, are at the same time good literature. "Religion," incidentally, is for their purpose interpreted as that of the Hebrew-Christian tradition.

The list of acknowledgments and the table of contents prove they went to considerable lengths to see that the more vociferous sects, Protestants, Catholic, Jewish, agnostic and atheistic, were represented. And on the jacket are the enthusiastic and inevitably laudatory comments of denominational readers.

It is an amazing collection really. The list of authors is perhaps the most fascinating part of it—Saki to Saroyan, Lloyd Douglas to John Dewey. You won't be surprised to find Chesterton or Harry Emerson Fosdick or even Walter Lippmann, but you will be tempted to raise an eyebrow when you see Dorothy Parker and Joyce Kilmer side by side, and H. G. Wells caught between the covers of the same book with C. S. Lewis. The supposedly sardonic Dorothy, by the way, is represented by two lovely, tender Christmas poems. Wells gives us the old one of a Christ, a twenty-first century reformer, born in advance of his time and ours.

For the rest, each writer has been chosen for something he has had to say which remotely or closely touches on some phase of that most bewildering and haunting part of the thought of man—his spiritual and religious belief. Some do it with humor—Fr. Leonard Feeney's parody of Noel Coward, for example; others with reverence and an eye to the current scene, as Maxwell Anderson in his "Journey to Jerusalem"; still others with the social consciousness of Countee Cullen in his "The Litany of the Dark People."

The last section, "Affirmations," will be a quarry for quotes in innumerable sermons and speeches. While interesting for its thought content, it lacks the deeper feeling of the story and poetry sections.

The whole anthology is useful and worthy—a high compliment to any anthology. Individual pieces unquestionably will appeal to a wide range of readers. And yet it lacks something we need in finding or losing a belief. Perhaps it is too much to expect mystical exaltation in the present generation; perhaps, too, it is too much to find tortured disbelief. It's all so watered down. As reflected here religious ecstasy seems no more than what can be found in the unexplained phenomena of a spiritualist's seance. Denial appears petulance at social injustice or simply the indifference of lazy minds.

Word

By Robert P. Tristram Coffin

BARE willows by the pasture bars
Are budding out with furry stars,
Though ice still locks the woods, the sun
Sets a warm large Summer one.

Not a blossom, not a bird,
Yet sudden everywhere is the word
This northern world has entered the clear
Leafy green half of the year.

The word is raucous throaty words,
And down the cold green sky slant birds,
Each with a promise in the mouth,
Each with beak full of the South.

Every bird with the silver ring
On his neck is bringing Spring,
His neck so lengthens towards his tryst
His words come down ventriloquist.

The sounds come on ahead of the wide
Spear that enters twilight's side,
And before the whistling wings can pass
Pale ghosts stir deep that will be grass.

Twofold Fight

THE MACCABEES. By Elias Bickermann. New York: Schocken Books, Inc. 1947. 120 *pp.* $1.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT PICK

AMONG the nine champions of impeccable knighthood whose statues still adorn the *Schöne Brunnen* in Nuremberg, its fourteenth-century master also included Judah Maccabeus. It is hardly likely that any of the Hitlerites who strutted by that German Gothic marvel in the days of their Nuremberg glory, recalled the deeds which lifted the Jewish warrior onto the plane of medieval legend. For what the Maccabees did—stripped of all legend and lore—was to preserve Judaism, and carry the flame of monotheism through the last century and a half of the pre-Christian era into the Messianic period.

The present little book tells their amazing story in the light of modern research, without ever stressing its modern implications. The Maccabees waged a twofold fight: on the one hand there were the violent *gleichschaltung* tendencies of the Oriental rulers under whose suzerainty the Jews lived, on the other the lure of Hellenization sweeping the entire Near East.

The armed insurrection which the first of the Maccabees, a provincial priest by the name of Mattathias and his five sons raised against Syrian persecution became a symbol of active opposition against governmental interference with questions of faith. As such it lives in our memory. The far more complicated story of the internal Jewish struggles revolving around the Hellenistic Emancipation is less commonly known among laymen. Very few, I suppose, are aware that "the accommodation of Hellenistic civilization to the Torah, begun by the Maccabees . . ., gave Judaism the form that it was to have for centuries."

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If idealism is not good sense, why do our statesmen continually employ the language of idealism? If lofty phrases which conceal coarse aims are the homage that vice pays to virtue, the hypocrisy indicates at the least that men are most profoundly moved by noble images. The noble image of democracy, truly presented, brings in its train relief from tension, inward peace, a pervasive and generous calm. But a country which, possessing the atom bomb, through the mouths of its rulers also demands for the first time in its history universal military training cannot impress upon Europe an image of nobility, but only one of fear. We admire Gandhi; I wonder whether we dare to imagine him in the White House? Yet this dreamer did more for millions of men than any Secretary of State has done.

We need, nationally and individually, to learn humility, to practise that generosity of the soul it is so difficult for "practical" men to comprehend. Generosity of the soul is not synonymous with an interested humanitarianism. It is good to send food and clothing to the starved, but it is wrong therefore to demand that countries shall grow, not merely grateful, but subservient.

The Voice of America that should be heard is silent. In the English-speaking world only Churchill is the universal orator. Great in the virtues of loyalty, he cannot comprehend the significance of trust. Where is the great man who stands for, who embodies, who speaks out in the name of radiant hope as, however mistakenly, Stalin or Hitler or Mussolini or Trotzky or Lenin have spoken for belief? After Gandhi, there is only silence around the globe. The popular success of the Freedom Train shows there is another way to recovery than guns and treaties about oil. Only by another tone and in another language shall we really lead mankind. And meanwhile the poets, the novelists, the artists, again too often persecuted by "practical" men, again warn us of catastrophe; again the ears of statesmen are deaf to their warnings, as loyalty checks and thought control and suspicion and fear corrode our own faith in our cause. Meanwhile we confront the sphinx of history as, smiling enigmatically, it watches us play the old, blind, selfish diplomatic game.

Prayer

By Ben Ray Redman

LET age be gracious,
Or let death come soon.
Why hate at evening
What one loved at noon?

"AN EMOTIONALLY POWERFUL INDICTMENT of the private insane asylum as demonstrated in the case (documented, according to the foreword) of a California mother held without legal commitment for the convenience of her philandering husband. Carries heavier punch than *Snake Pit.*"
— DONALD GORDON, *American News of Books*

"**What a book!** It ought to serve as a veritable 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' for the countless wretches so infamously enslaved in our sanitariums and asylums . . . Should be required reading for people of every sort. Beautifully, brilliantly written, it has literary power apart from its great theme." — RUPERT HUGHES

"**THE STUBBORN WOOD** should prove to be the 'Les Miserables' of this mad century, or even more world-shaking, for it deals with a more subtle slavery in our time. The truth in this book is too stubborn for me or anybody else to resist. It seems fantastic that husbands can get rid of wives, or vice versa, by charging insanity. It's fantastic, but it's true. What goes on behind the locked doors of sanitariums among the cases of mental illness is something which it is hoped THE STUBBORN WOOD will tear down and destroy. That THE STUBBORN WOOD is magnificently written is a further tribute to the inspiration which fired the author of this terrific social indictment."
— FRANK SCULLY, *author, screen writer, columnist*

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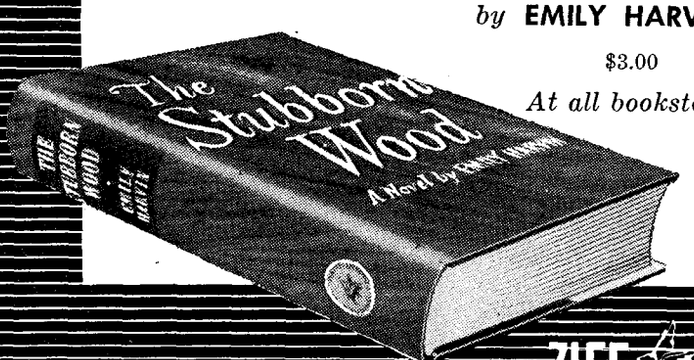

ZIFF-DAVIS

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Seeing Things

LOOK, MA

WITHOUT meaning to be too Parson Weems about it, I cannot tell a lie. At least, not about this. I dreaded seeing "Look, Ma, I'm Dancin'!"* I dreaded it because the thought of having to contemplate Nancy Walker in a star part and for a whole evening depressed me. As it turned out, I was wrong. I enjoyed her very much; indeed, as much as I had more than seven years ago when "Best Foot Forward" had first exposed me to what is not only remarkable but fortunately unique about Miss Walker.

She was then one of a stageful of ebullient teen-agers that George Abbott had brought together for another of those Children's Crusades which, from time to time, he leads behind the footlights. The whole cast, in that now distant musical romp, was so unashamedly and zestfully young that it was guaranteed to make Mickey Rooney feel like Foxy Grandpa. Miss Walker was new to all of us. She had novelty in her favor. And novelty, though seemingly a fairy godmother, is as unreliable a friend as show business knows. First impressions may establish an overnight hit, but it is second, third, and twentieth impressions which underwrite a career.

No one quite like Miss Walker had then been seen hereabouts. Nor, as I have hinted, has anyone since. As is the way of comedians, she could not claim comeliness as her strong point. Yet she contrived to convert into an asset what the beauticians might have considered a liability. Of sex she made a travesty; of frustration a joke. She was as bouncy as a medicine ball, as noisy as a pneumatic drill, as tough as an iron heap. She was, however, likable—immensely so—as she bulldozed her way through her songs and around in the script.

Plainly she was one of those square-shouldered, square-faced, acre-hearted, good-natured girls who, though everybody's pal, never becomes Queen of the May. If the boys ran from her in "Best Foot Forward," she was no less active in running after them. That was where the fun came in. That was the way, too, in which as a zany Miss Walker stood out from the whole rompered tribe surrounding her. Although the swans may win the "Oh's" and "Ah's," it is the ugly ducklings who win the laughs. Miss Walker won them—beyond counting. In a lesser part which, because of the violence of her personality, appeared major, she came near to stealing the show.

A scrapbook, already sunflower yellow, reminds me that, after that first night, I wrote of her, "Miss Walker is a superior comic. She knows her way around in a song. She will not only go, but has gone, places as a performer because, in addition to her surety, she is blessed with an epidemic personality."

The trouble with epidemic personalities is that, like epidemics, they can run their courses swiftly. It is easy to develop an immunity to what was once contagious in them. We can be so overexposed to them that the wonder they once provoked shrinks into weariness. The very singularities which initially we relished tend, unless their range is genuine, to appear no more than repetitious. The change in our attitude to a performer, blessed or cursed with such a personality, does not mean that he has become any less good than he was at the outset. It means only that we have caught up with him and that, having reached the point of satiety, we have grown tired. This is one of the oldest (and, to the player so betrayed, must seem one of the most baffling) of all the infidelities of which theatregoers are guilty.

Undoubtedly, Miss Walker grew in proficiency as the years rolled by, and she was seen as a woman cab-driver in "On the Town" and a Communist co-ed in "Barefoot Boy with Cheek." Yet meanwhile, I must confess, my own enjoyment of her performances grew less and less. So far as I was concerned, the law of diminishing returns began to operate against her—inexorably. I could guess how she would be used; anticipate what she would do. Where at first seeing she had made me howl, she began to make me groan, slightly. She did this in spite of the fact that she was doing what she had always done, only doing it better. The truth is that, having once found it uproarious, I had come to be allergic to the illusion she creates, with her broad shoulders and husky build, of being a football player bewigged and begowned for a Hasty Pudding show. That is why I dreaded spending a whole evening in her presence at "Look, Ma, I'm Dancin'!"

—*Graphic House.*

Nancy Walker looks like a "football player bewigged and begowned for a Hasty Pudding show."

I am happy to admit I was wrong. Although she is still far from being my favorite comic, I did enjoy Miss Walker. In Mr. Abbott's new production she is displayed to better advantage than she has been since "Best Foot Forward." What is perhaps most surprising about the evening is that, having proved monotonous in secondary parts, Miss Walker is able to carry a lead. Not that she has changed. Her admirers need have no fear on that score. She is as tough, as rowdy, and as blessedly unaverage as she ever was. But what I, at least, had found downright objectionable in her in "Barefoot Boy with Cheek" has now been channeled to happy advantage in a book which is both wise and generous in the opportunities it gives her.

"Look, Ma, I'm Dancin'!" is an acceptable enough show about a rich girl—the newest of nouveau riche girls, one gathers—(Miss Walker, of course), who traipses up and down the country dancing in the chorus of the ballet troupe she subsidizes. If it starts better than it ends, indeed if it begins brilliantly and then winds up in mere routine, that is no novel experience in musical comedy. Like many other human efforts, musical comedies are apt to be better on the offensive than the defensive.

BECAUSE of its subject, "Look, Ma, I'm Dancin'!" is a stomping, strutting show filled with parodies of the classical ballet. The best of these occurs early in the second half when some restless sleepers pretend to be somnambulists on a Pullman car. Al-

*LOOK, MA, I'M DANCIN'! Conceived by Jerome Robbins. Music and lyrics by Hugh Martin. Book by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee. Settings by Oliver Smith. Costumes by John Pratt. Ballet arrangements by Trude Rittman. Direction and choreography by George Abbott and Mr. Robbins. Presented by Mr. Abbott. With a cast including Nancy Walker, Harold Lang, Janet Reed, Alice Pearce, Loren Welch, Virginia Gorski, etc. At the Adelphi.

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MARJORIE and SHERMAN EWING present
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KATHARINE CORNELL GODFREY TEARLE
ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA
with KENT SMITH
LENORE ULRIC—RALPH CLANTON
Staged by GUTHRIE McCLINTIC
Martin Beck, W. 45. Evs. 8:15. Mat. Sat. & Mon.

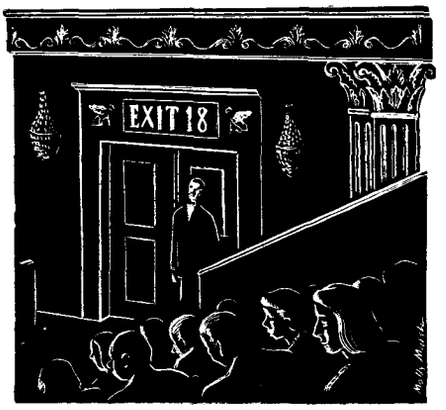
though not inspired, as is the Mack Sennett Ballet in "High Button Shoes," the modernistic ballet, staged as the first act's finale, is hilarious in spite of the easiness of its spoofing.

Through all this hurly-burly Miss Walker moves, adding to it wherever she goes. What the good people of Texas would think of her heresies when, in "I'm Tired of Texas," she vehemently dismisses that sizable state, city by city, as "the rear-end of the U.S.A.," I tremble to guess. My suspicion is that the Alamo may before long be manned again. Yet, beyond dispute or lasso range, Miss Walker is amusing in scene after scene as the evening goes its way.

Big Bertha is about as near as she comes to subtlety. A headline is her notion of innuendo; a chimney her idea of an exclamation point. Still, she does win and deserve her laughs at doing all the expected things either with the lines assigned her or in burlesquing the tarlataned realm of Degas. Once again, after a long hiatus, she is as likable as she was when first she burst upon the town. She is so zestful, sure of herself, and obviously good-natured that there is no resisting her.

The truest pleasure offered by "Look, Ma, I'm Dancin'!" is provided almost at curtain rise by Harold Lang. It is then, while waiting to board a Pullman car at the Pennsylvania Station, that Mr. Lang, as a newcomer, is asked by the veterans of the ballet troupe what dances he can do. The number in which he executes these is called "I Gotta Dance." Palpably, Mr. Lang is a young man who has no other choice. Let the music start and his feet cannot keep still. Whether he is doing a jig, a softshoe routine, a waltz, a conga, a gypsy dance, a reel, a ballet sequence, or some Indian war steps, he and the music are one. His dancing is seemingly as effortless as it is instinctive. His joy in what he is doing becomes ours. And this form of contagion, though not necessarily epidemic, is one of the most agreeable experiences an audience and a performer can share.

JOHN MASON BROWN.



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FICTION

(*Continued from page* 13)

people in a time which was often fabulous and unbelievable. It is a panorama of a period most of us remember, the story of our own times, and its fictional characters are as real as people we knew in those past years, as people we know today.

Cowboy Into Pugilist

TEMPER THE WIND. By Clyde Brion Davis. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1948. 252 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by JOHN WILLIAM ROGERS

COWBOY SHANDY is a young garage mechanic. He wants to be a prizefighter and there are already a few bouts to his credit. He has returned from serving the Navy in the Pacific to his native Wyoming and works by days in the little town of Buell, where he grew up. "Temper the Wind" is a picture of the people Cowboy knew in Buell, and a record of their frequent extended conversations about life, love, and the pursuit of happiness—conversations indulged in by the owner of a diner-cafe, a taxi driver, a railway mail clerk, a sports writer, and a retired prostitute, among others.

The story is told through the eyes and emotions of Cowboy. It begins in terms of incident and anecdote concerning various people of the town and gradually narrows until it centers upon Cowboy with a detailed picture of how he felt before the biggest fight of his career and what happened, blow by blow, when he got into the ring. Of course there is a nice girl and a gentle love story.

This novel is frankly for entertainment, and for entertainment—we assume—of masculine readers, at least of readers who are devotees of poker and pugilism. It reveals a deal of shrewd observation about our native scene and is narrated with breeziness and a flavorful feeling for colloquial speech. It does not fail to strew over its pages the half dozen slum words so fashionable with writers today.

Cowboy himself is a pleasantly drawn young American of virility and intelligence, but this reviewer can hardly imagine a similar young man—a Western prize-fighting mechanic—who would use so glibly in his working vocabulary things and ideas that Mr. Davis lets Cowboy employ in telling the story. To mention a few—Chopin's "Revolutionary Etude," Bernard Shaw's philosophy, complexes and sublimations. We doubt, however, if many readers will be disturbed by the subtle extension of Cowboy's intellectual sophistication. They will rather be impressed with the competent job the author has done in being entertaining in this believable and bright picture of a bit of small-town life; and those who have read his previous "The Anointed" with satisfaction should find this one definitely to their taste.

Day of Reckoning

THE STREET OF SEVEN MONKS. By William Woods. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1948. 309 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by ERIC L. MCKITRICK

A GREAT many novelists over the past twenty years or so, having been given the nod by certain of their illustrious forebears, have taken to introducing as heroes of their stories persons of cultivated sensibilities—the "artist-type." Sometimes this is merely a gesture of lip-service to the supposed demands of one's craft, and as a manner of orientation has little meaning. But even with utter sincerity and the best will in the world, the artist-hero needs a veritable real-life prototype to lead him through that disorderly inferno, the "modern novel." He generally ends up in one of two ways. Either his life, his environment, and those about him are subtly transformed into some sort of *histoire raisonnée* of himself and his art, or else he finds to his disillusionment, like Mario Cavaradossi, that art

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The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
BLOOD ON THE BOSOM DEVINE *Thomas Kyd* (Lippincott: $2.50)	Unclothed "model" skilfully skewered on theatre stage with detective Sam Phelan in audience. His rough-hewn sleuthing confounds dexterous criminal.	Denizens of small-city honky-tonk convincingly portrayed; murder method very tricky; solution may leave reader still guessing.	Fair
DEATH OF AN AUTHOR *John Rhode* (Dodd, Mead: $2.50)	English novelist fatally bashed while chopping wood. Dr. Priestley tips method to Supt. Waghorn, who traces multiple crimes to professional slayer.	Sinuous plot worked out with familiar Rhodesian finesse—and more action than usual. Priestley-Hanslet-Waghorn combo works smoothly and well.	Estimable
THE DARK WHEEL *Philip MacDonald and A. B. Correll* (Morrow: $2.50)	Fatalities follow aristocratic Gothamite's backing of play by injured flyer with lovely actress wife. Her unprincipled fellow Thespian curbs killer.	Colorful people move swiftly through sequence of sleek and suspenseful scenes to split-second "solution." Designedly no "mystery" but quite undownputtable.	High-octane

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and reality stand perpetually in each other's way. In either case, the novelist bites off a big mouthful; he is, in effect, announcing himself as that artist's spokesman. Both talent and temperament must weigh heavily in the results.

Fernand Gravier, in William Woods's novel, had been thought of before the war as France's foremost young talent in music. Called to the colors, he had left his young wife, Catherine, with the family of his parents and grandfather in the Haute-Savoie. The story opens with the German collapse and Gravier is on his way back to France, having spent five unspeakable years in German prison camps. The journey across central Europe is his Odyssey; there are villains every step of the way.

Meanwhile, back in his native village, activity burgeons with the dawning of peace. The Americans come, and one of them, a young captain, is billeted in the Graviers' house in the Street of Seven Monks. Papa Gravier, immersed in his "Lives of the Saints," steps outside briefly and returns, never to leave the house again. Mercenary Mama, a secret collaborationist, makes a final effort to wind up her infamous dealings before the return of her son, while wise old Grandfather, a former Deputy in the heyday of Clemenceau, is called from retirement to be mayor of the town. Catherine, weary of waiting, finds it harder and harder to remember how it was in the old days with Fernand. At the very end of the book, Fernand himself arrives home. He enters the house in the small hours of the night, and by the coming of dawn his accounts with everyone are settled for all time.

Mr. Woods has a sure sense of the dramatic; the events of his novel are well-paced and expertly controlled. In setting the scene in France, he happily refrains from the temptation, once made so notorious by Frances Hodgson Burnett, of trying to gallicize every word in the English language for the sake of verisimilitude. He is an experienced craftsman; he tells a good story and one that doesn't dawdle by the wayside. This may, in fact, be a confining specialty, for as a moralist Mr. Woods is nothing if not confusing.

Fernand Gravier the composer, in spite of the author's obviously intelligent attitude on musical matters, does not seem to have much to do with the case. What it is, or once was, that made music a necessity for him, is never made very clear or convincing. As a matter of fact, neither this nor the French setting appear to be indispensable. There is even some doubt as to whether or not the war itself was really necessary, for what we are, the author seems to say, we become independently of circumstances — though he tells us early in the book how altered the hero has become on account of his imprisonment, "so rotten with stench and hatred no woman, no music, not even an idea would dare approach him," while time seems to stand still for all the rest. (Was that not the illusion we all indulged in on the first day home?)

Man's only savior, one is told, is the wisdom of the intellect, but this dualistic thesis is given rather one-sided proof, for the book is one emotional crisis after another, and of the choices confronting the hero at the end, he unhesitatingly chooses the irrational one.

MORROW
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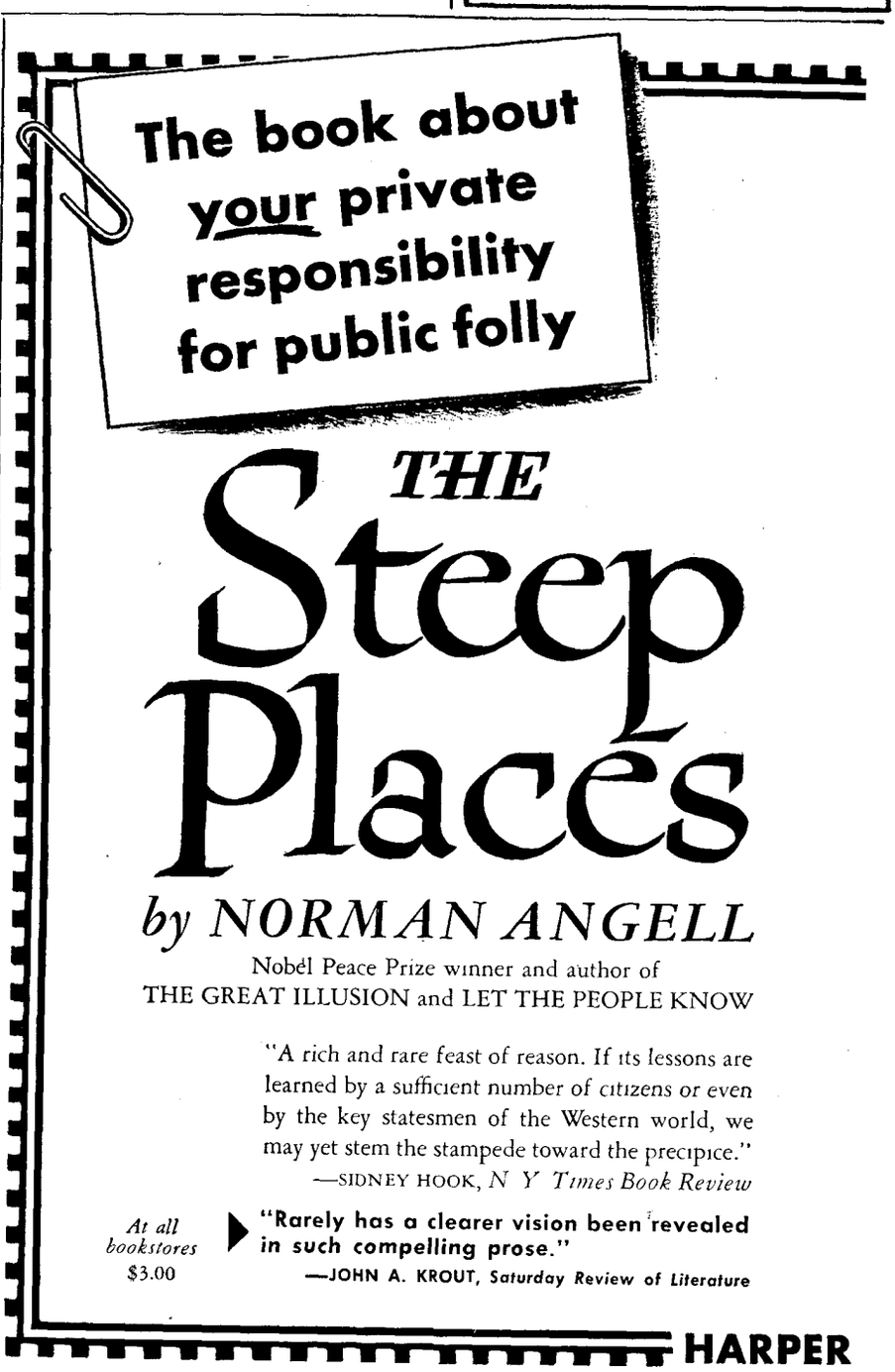
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History. *Joan of Arc was a forerunner of French nationalism (see Frances Winwar's new biography, reviewed elsewhere in this issue), but the great Revolution, catapulting France into the modern age, brought that nationalism to fruition. Power shifted from aristocracy to people while feudal heads rolled from the guillotine! For the outcome in modern France we recommend Gordon Wright's forthcoming "The Reshaping of French Democracy." Less violently but as surely, the Near East, still rich, feudal, and backward, is struggling today towards the modern age of nationalism and democracy, as one may learn from Brockelmann's history (reviewed below) and E. A. Speiser's recent "The United States and the Near East." . . . Coleman's popular history of the American colonies (see below) might well be compared with Wright's more scholarly "The Atlantic Frontier," and Wertenbaker's "The Puritan Oligarchy."*

Four Rebellions of 1789

THE COMING OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION. By Georges Lefebvre. Translated from the French by R. R. Palmer. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1947. 233 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by PAUL H. BEIK

ALMOST nine years have passed since the summer of 1939, when the French edition of this fine little book appeared in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the French Revolution. Overshadowed by war and then attacked by the Vichy authorities, who destroyed 8,000 copies, M. Lefebvre's story of the great days of 1789 now appears for the first time in an English translation. Written by the most distinguished living authority on the French Revolution, it not only recalls the tradition which Vichy wished to silence, but also makes meaningful some contemporary problems. No one who understands M. Lefebvre's analysis of the events and ideas of 1789 should fail to see their relationship to liberalism and democracy and indeed to de Gaulle and the Communists as well.

For in M. Lefebvre's view there were four revolutions in 1789, bringing into play various layers of a society whose formal contours could no longer contain the insistent reality within. First the privileged nobles, clergy, *parlements*, and provincial estates attempted to limit the absolute monarchy in its hour of financial need. By so doing they opened the way to the second revolution of 1789, that of the middle class, whose title to the succession was their ability and economic power and whose banner was a moderate, property-holders' liberalism. When crown and aristocracy, by a fatal decision, closed ranks against this new threat and prepared to use force against the National Assembly, the liberal program was saved by a popular revolution of the lower middle classes and workers in the cities—thus the storming of the Bastille and, more important, a debt to the numerous poor, implying eventual democracy. Not quite simultaneously, the peasants rose: the great majority of the population, moving with an irresistible force born of land hunger and accentuated by economic crisis and by insecurity in the face of mounting disorder. This was the fourth revolution, which, like the popular movement in the cities, would have to be faced and eventually accepted by the liberal leaders if they were not to be crushed beneath its weight. The next steps, legal abolition of privileges and the issuing of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, followed logically; and they in turn were related to the events of October, when fear of royal and aristocratic counter-force led to another Parisian insurrection, which brought assembly and king from Ver-

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sailles to the city which had defended the one from the other.

M. Lefebvre's mixture of narrative and analysis, so artfully condensed that one despairs of summarizing without injustice, concludes with the October Days. Of necessity, he tells some parts of the story in more detail than others; the ideas of the Enlightenment, although cleverly joined to the social material which is the author's forte, are treated in the briefest possible fashion; and the general reader, at whom this book is aimed, may fail to appreciate the references which make significant every line of M. Lefebvre's fifteen-page analysis of the peasant problem. Still, everything of importance in the explosive mixture of 1789 is present, and the elements do not stand separately, in lists, but are made to act upon each other as the narrative progresses.

M. Lefebvre takes no philosophical stand on the question of violence, but his position as an historian is clear: in a revolution, the principal issue of which was social rather than political, "the Court turned to force to protect the aristocracy . . . The Third Estate, driven to the wall, had to choose between resistance and surrender."

An essentially similar struggle, complicated by civil war and foreign intervention, was to provoke the massacres of September 1792, and eventually the Reign of Terror. Meanwhile a conflict "between proprietors and proletarians could hardly fail to take form. It was to lead the Revolution on to democracy, and was to be decisive, ten years later, in bringing the bourgeoisie to appeal to military dictatorship . . ."

The author's stand with respect to the revolution and Napoleon is thus made plain, in company with what might be called his social approach to politics and ideas. France was to outgrow her two nineteenth-century Caesars and contribute her share to liberalism, that "great stream of ideas which, while expressing the ascendancy of the bourgeoisie, constituted a common ideal that summarized the evolution of Western civilization." No doubt, as today's events illustrate so well, one stage in that development is ended. Mr. Lefebvre wrote in 1939 that the very confidence with which statements about liberty and equality had been issued one hundred and fifty years before had made them general enough to be applicable to an age seeking social democracy. France has not yet, and may not, solve this problem, but M. Lefebvre's book has certainly placed it in historical perspective. The translator, R. R. Palmer, himself an authority on the revolution, has written an excellent prefatory essay.

Birth of Our Nation, Abridged

THE FIRST FRONTIER. By R. V. Coleman. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1948. 458 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by RAYMOND WALTERS, JR.

SOME years ago a young lawyer friend asked R. V. Coleman for a book which would give him "the inside story of how this country began, why the first settlers came, what sort of people they were, how they made their livings, what they thought about."

Mr. Coleman, who has spent most of his adult life overseeing the publication of historical books for leading publishers, searched through the works on America's past which lined the walls of his study. They were all too long or too specialized or too scholarly in tone for the "busy" reader.

So Mr. Coleman wrote "The First Frontier." For his source material he resorted mostly to the standard printed collections of official records and old chronicles, using them with the care and discrimination of the true scholar. He wrote his book in a spirited if somewhat awkward style. Unhappily it falls far short of filling the young lawyer's bill.

For reasons of space, Mr. Coleman

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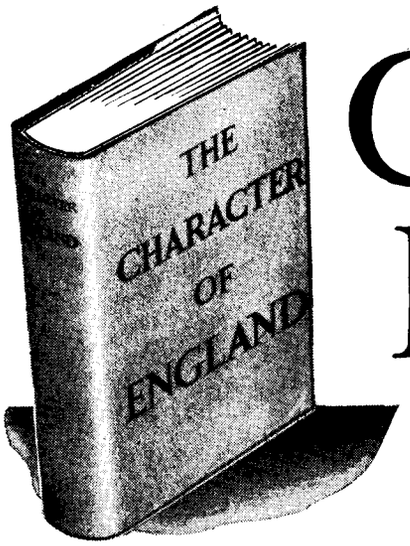

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has limited his account of "how this country began" to exploration and settlement in the area that is now the United States, from Columbus's first voyage in 1492 to the completion of English control of the Atlantic seaboard from Maine to Virginia in 1664. The latter is an unfortunate selection for a terminal date, for it is hardly a great milestone in American colonial history, and it leaves the first important permanent settlements in present-day New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the Carolinas, and Georgia largely unaccounted for.

Most of Mr. Coleman's book is pure narrative. Its pages are crammed with dramatic incident: Spanish conquistadors pushing their way through trackless wilderness in search of gold; Frenchmen crouched in birch-bark canoes, paddling their way up the St. Lawrence River and into the heart of the continent by way of the Great Lakes; Dutchmen at New Amsterdam industrially collecting furs to adorn the fine ladies of Paris; would-be aristocrats fumbling in their efforts to set up a tobacco economy on the James River; the Puritans administering a stern theocracy on Massachusetts Bay. He does full justice to the romantic episodes: the proud Spaniard Menendez reluctantly accepting the sister of an Indian chieftain as his bride; the still unsolved disappearance of all the members of the Roanoke colony, including Virginia Dare, the first child of English parentage born in the New World; John Rolfe abashedly confessing his love for Pocohantas. He reports with relish about Puritan women whispering heretical gossip while a maid servant eavesdrops, about a New Haven citizen seducing a friend of his wife while they are out in the back lot gathering pumpkins.

As he recounts these stories, Mr. Coleman rather incidentally meets his lawyer friend's request for information about "what sort of people came to America" and "how they made their livings." But his disinclination to generalize or to look for deeper meanings leaves his book largely a series of disconnected episodes, without particular significance. If he had told something of the political, economic, and religious conditions in Europe which created the interest in America, for example, he would not only have obtained a unifying theme for his book, but he would have answered his friend's request for an explanation as to "why the first settlers came." His preoccupation with incident allows him little time to tell "what they thought about." Even in his accounts of Virginia and New England, which are fuller than those of the other settlements, he provides only cursory treatment of intellectual activity. By implication Mr. Coleman does make it clear, in his mildly censorious discussion of the Puritan church-state, that the "saints" disapproved of tolerance and democracy.

"The First Frontier" is profusely illustrated with a fine selection of especially prepared maps and reproductions of old prints and paintings. Together with Mr. Coleman's text they form an engrossing book for adults whose interest in history remains primarily in the stories told and the scenes painted.

Fabulous Land

HISTORY OF THE ISLAMIC PEOPLES. By Carl Brockelmann. Translated by Joel Carmichael and Moshe Perlmann. New York: G. P. Putnam Sons. 1947. 582 *pp.* $6.

Reviewed by G. Levi Della Vida

EVEN among the German orientalists of the older generation—the last to live up to the glorious tradition of pre-imperial Germany — Professor Carl Brockelmann, now seventy-nine, is an almost unique phenomenon. With tireless industry and astonishing scholarship he has contributed some fundamental works to such disparate fields as Syriac lexicography, Arabic literature, and Semitic comparative linguistics; his research work extends even beyond the limits of Semitics, including Hanitic and Turkish studies. A brief and popular account of the history of the Islamic peoples, which he wrote as early as 1910, was entirely reworked and enlarged by him in that fateful year 1939 and is now presented in an English translation.

No work of such a comprehensive outlook, which leads the reader from the earliest records concerning the fabulous land of the Queen of Sheba down to the intricacies of the political game being played in our days from Morocco to Afghanistan, has so far existed in English. Unrestricted praise is due therefore to Joel Carmichael and Moshe Perlmann for making this study available to the American public which, after a long period of aloofness from the Islamic world, has now suddenly developed a keen interest in it as a consequence of the war and new American commitments, political and economic. Since knowledge of the past is a prerequisite for the understanding of the present, full justice is here given to that interest.

The author is concerned, above all, with the narration of facts as they actually happened. While not forgetting to link causes and effects, he

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

OCCUPATIONS OF AUTHORS' CHARACTERS

This week you are asked to identify twenty-five authors with a group of three of their characters who are (we hope) identifiable by their occupations. A score of fifteen is par, eighteen is very good, and twenty-one or better is excellent. Answers are on page 35.

1. Adventurous banker; dignified bishop; irresponsible store owner.
2. Amnestic soldier; frustrated scientist; kidnaped hero.
3. Apprentice pirate; bribe-taking politician; businesslike sorcerer.
4. Ardent phonetician; knighted surgeon; socialite prize fighter.
5. Artful pickpocket; grave-robbing messenger; infant ballet dancer.
6. Austrian exile; Russian exile; exile from civilization.
7. Blind artist; deep-sea fisherman; professional soldier.
8. Bogus duke; Indian murderer; misunderstood lawyer.
9. Castaway sailor; enchanted maiden; itchy-footed king.
10. Cowardly officer; dying sailor; unhappy trader.
11. Crippled doctor; elderly author; leprous artist.
12. Crusading journalist; novice actress; shrewd art dealer.
13. Deformed dwarf; disfigured mountebank; escaped convict.
14. Demented dog lover; undependable bus-driver; unhappy Nazi.
15. Deposed emperor; ex-prostitute; impoverished farmer.
16. Female truck farmer; pioneer newspaper woman; showboat actress.
17. Gallant cavalier; London editor; scheming governess.
18. Heroic messenger; joyful factory-worker; too-happy duchess.
19. Honest carpenter; miserly weaver; radical watchmaker.
20. Murderous insurance salesman; reversed embezzler; singing contractor.
21. Penurious bookseller; reluctant printer; respectable housekeeper.
22. Philosophic clown; vain steward; vengeful money-lender.
23. Resourceful butler; romantic minister; unsuccessful artist.
24. Uncultured realtor; unprincipled preacher; unscrupulous dictator.
25. Unfortunate architect; unimpressive MP; wealthy art collector.

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seldom indulges in generalization. He avoids passing judgment upon the process by which Islam, from its humble beginnings, developed into one of the greatest and most dynamic of world civilizations which deeply affected the material and spiritual life of Asia, Africa, and Europe for more than thirteen centuries. One feels utterly discouraged by the gloomy picture of the long and monotonous sequence of wars, dynamic upheavals, shifts of territory, and steady oppression of the popular masses by the ruling elite which makes up the political history of Islam — whether under Arab, Persian, or Turkish supremacy. Actually, in spite of the evils of tyrannical government and corrupt administration, the Islamic peoples were able to make substantial and imperishable additions to science, literature, and art. To these achievements, the author calls attention in brief yet penetrating digressions.

In dealing with the political issues of the last decades, Brockelmann reveals himself a German, and a German moreover who, at the eve of the Second World War, had not yet reconciled himself to the outcome of the first. His reaction to British and French policies in the Near East and North Africa is far from favorable, and in appreciating the results of Mustafa Ataturk's regime, he feels inclined to justify dictatorship. If we remember, however, that he was writing under the least amenable of all dictators, one should praise him for having clung, as a whole, to the dignified composure of an impartial historian. Since the translators did not take exception to the author's personal views—except for the elimination of a misplaced homage to Mussolini's administration in Libya and the attenuation of a tribute paid to Franco's "liberation" war—it is hard to understand why they felt compelled to warn against Brockelmann's not overly biased presentation of the Zionist issue.

As a matter of fact, the translators have not only respected the author's text but have done their best to improve upon it; and have generally succeeded in doing so. Dr. Perlmann is responsible for a carefully selected summary of the political events from 1939 to 1947 which brings the historical narration up to date and adds a flavor of freshness. The biibliography has been substantially extended. A few remaining factual errors of the author's were perhaps unavoidable.

G. Levi Della Vida, founder and editor of Oriente Moderno *in Italy and internationally known Arabic and Islamic scholar, teaches at the University of Pennsylvania.*

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Poetry.

Every new generation of poets rebels against certain of the manners, methods, and phraseological practices of its predecessors. Such rebellion results in experiment, sometimes effective and sometimes merely nonsensical. Dudley Fitts, who specializes in modern poetry, here shows that he can keenly discriminate between the two. Other new poets, and older, abide more by tradition. Whether or not "influences" are present, they proceed with comparative safety, yet sometimes lack the spark of wild but fortunate phrase struck out by the more daring. The books of poems discussed below provide examples of this variety of expression, both from special presses and established publishing houses; the latter being just as likely today as the former to espouse a modern trend.

Rare Felicity and Infelicity

POEMS BY WILLIAM JAY SMITH. New York: The Banyan Press. 1947. 31 *pp.* $2.50.

DEATH IN A ROOM. By Michael Fraenkel. Waco, Tex.: Motive Book Shop. 1947. 52 *pp.* $1.25.

THE TIME BY DIALING. By Myron H. Broomell. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1947. 62 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by DUDLEY FITTS

THE LORD, *mediante* Bill Benét, hath delivered into my hands the poems of William Jay Smith. It is several years now since I first read his "Hotel Continental" in one or another of Oscar Williams's numerous anthologies; but the rhythm which seized me that day:

O I feel like the kinks in the paws of the Sphinx!
O I've got those negotiable knees!
On goes the phone with a tone all its own:
P—lease! P—lease! P—lease!

has obsessed me ever since, more compulsively even than Mark Twain's "Punch, brothers, punch with care: Punch in the presence of the passen*jaire*" obsessed *him*. Reason for literary manslaughter, one would say; yet bloodily predisposed to revenge though I am, I can report only that this beautifully made little book is an engaging and sometimes impressive contribution to contemporary poetry.

For once, a publisher's puff hits the mark: "a permanence, a rare felicity," writes Miss Marianne Moore of "Cupidon"; and the phrase might be applied with equal propriety to other poems—"The Massacre of the Innocents," for instance, or "The Diving-Bell" ("Lost is the voice of the dark in dark dissolving, / Lost in the somnolent surf, the summer-swell"), or the deceptively fragile "The Closing of the Rodeo." (The suicidally inclined will find "Hotel Continental" on page 7.) Mr. Smith's verse, even in so doomed an Empsonian exercise as "Villanelle," is always controlled, lucid, rhetorically and sonally responsible; one looks forward to a deepening of emotion, to a wider range of connotation than all but two or three of the best of these poems achieve. Meanwhile, here is a salutary first book.

I must risk being Odious. Unassuming as it is, Mr. Smith's "Poems" makes the work of Michael Fraenkel in "Death in a Room" seem very jejune indeed; and this becomes the more embarrassing when one reflects upon the excellence of Mr. Fraenkel's prose in "Bastard Death" and in the two "Hamlet" volumes written in collaboration with Henry Miller. Of that authoritative, deeply-felt style there is scarcely a trace in the present book.

Spattered down the page, the sparse, disjunct lines move, when they move at all, with a creakiness all too evocative of Louis Zukofsky; but generally they do not move. A strophe: "My wife has gone to her room / and left the woolen bed jacket for me and the slippers / she is waiting for me." An infelicitous syntax, surely, that thus clothes "me and the slippers" in a woolen bed jacket! and an equally insensitive ear, that can accept so prosy a twitching! The sterility, the lack of inventiveness, together with the lugubrious inconsequentiality of what Mr. Fraenkel is saying here, results in a kind of constipated muttering that can be most trying. Verse is clearly not his *métier*.

With "The Time by Dialing" we emerge into the realm of light and motion again, but it is also the realm of nothing much more than good fun. Mr. Broomell writes with ease—indeed, the lilt is constantly breaking into a lope—and he can be amusing, sharp sometimes, agreeably wistful; but I cannot discover that he has anything but commonplaces to say. Read "How Was the Show?," "The Death of the Body," "Of Providence." Read, above all, "The Defection," a kind of scoutmaster campfire come-come-buck-up speech to a conscientious objector, appropriately cast in rigid octosyllabic lines and decked out with the drabbest tropes and the weariest imagery that a well-pawed-over tradition affords. "No man but houses in his blood / The slain assailant clutching mud"; (one wants to improvise in the vein: "No man but longs within his bust / To see his enemy bite the dust"). "The Time by Dialing" is perfectly representative of so much of the verse that I have frequent occasion to discuss in *SRL:* deft, tricky, whimsical, false.

Reflective Mirror

AEGEAN ISLANDS AND OTHER POEMS. By Bernard Spencer. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1948. 60 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by GERARD PREVIN MEYER

IN APPROACHING a poet like Bernard Spencer, it is not enough to admire the moral stance—*against* war, the power of money, the chicanery of nations—*for* simple, hard-working, life-loving folk and love. Nor does it seem too important to recognize the accuracy of his swift impressionism on the one hand, and on the other to deprecate the careful-carelessness of his metrics. As for his all-too-evident helplessness before the "rising wind" of our times, before Time itself—we have all been touched with this paralysis of the will, more or less; at least, he has not made a virtue of it.

And it is all too easy to say that Spencer sounds like Hopkins ("Pulling through nations, fountained further than thought"), or Auden ("what's to become of the world if Money should suddenly die?") or Eliot ("The sour doorways of the poor" and "April comes as Beast-smell . . .") or Spender ("Being the shadow of the shadow of a war"). Spencer edited "Oxford Poetry" only a few years after Auden and Day Lewis performed this chore, and he has been published in the same magazines and anthologies; and, after all, the others are no mean learners themselves. (He appears, no doubt from temperament, to be less susceptible to the later deviations of Dylan Thomas and the "neo-romantics.")

As is proper for one who has wan-

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dered Aegean shores (Spencer was in His Britannic Majesty's Service in Italy and Greece and, apparently, in Egypt as well), there is often a spareness and austerity about his work, recalling classic style. But though he looks for classic serenity, he fails to find it even in its place of origin; his excavations, seeking "things which have . . . less of the earth's weight," turn up only "Stubble of conquests":

—And I suddenly discover this discovered town,
The wish of the many, their abused trust,
Blows down here in a little dust,
So much unpainted clay;
The minimum wish
For the permanence of the basic things of a life,
For children and friends and having enough to eat
And the great key of a skill;
The life the generals and the bankers cheat.

This "minimum wish," with its simplified accusation (recalling "Mauberley"), shows Spencer as spokesman for the average man. In fact, this poet is a mirror, leaning to the passivity that the image implies—unblurred, delicately communicative,

but a mirror. Nevertheless, the reflections in this mirror are often compelling; both "Egyptian Dancer at Shubra" and "Part of Plenty," to cite two of his successes, achieve the immediacy, the merger of the poet (and his readers) with the moment which seems to be his aim as an artist. One hopes that this talent, a genuine one, will surmount the despair which rises like a sea about these "Aegean Islands"—and sometimes, as in "Egyptian Delta," leads him to near-surrender.

Love, Hope, War, Life

VARIATIONS ON A THEME. By Dorothy Quick. New York: The Fine Editions Press. 1947. 94 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by I. L. SALOMON

WHEN a poet has been published for twenty years, a sixth volume ought to show a maturing in the poet's art, particularly when one has earned a tribute from no less a writer than James Branch Cabell, who regards "Dorothy Quick as a true poet" and as "a superb critic." The suspicion arises in this reviewer that Miss Quick is a true enough but not altogether discriminating poet.

If Miss Quick had been content to publish only the last two sections of "Variations on a Theme," she would have had a much better book. The lyrics under the variations "Of Love" and "Of Hope" are not comparable to the best love songs of our time; in communicable and unimaginative symbols, they are personal but unrealized. In the sonnet she works with a surer hand as is evident in "Riders of storm exult in rains that write/Their signature of silver on the land." Her attempt at a monologue by Isolde plumbs no depth and brings no tears; some of the lines are good, but the slight narrative has nothing in it to compel wonder or admiration.

The poems in the variations "Of War" and "Of Life" are stronger. There are a dozen that stand above anything else she has written. Such poems as "Underground," "America," "We Will Not Fail," and "Victory" are all to the good. The writing in these war poems is objective and direct. In the last section, "Benison," with its felicitous line "The lovely certainty of things that grow," and "Sand," with its metaphysical kinship to Blake's "Auguries of Innocence," are among the best in the book.

The Fine Editions Press has done a good job of bookmaking; the format is pleasing and the bookbinding superb.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Thorne Smith. 2. James Hilton. 3. W. S. Gilbert. 4. Bernard Shaw. 5. Charles Dickens. 6. Robert Sherwood. 7. Rudyard Kipling. 8. Mark Twain. 9. Alfred Tennyson. 10. Joseph Conrad. 11. Somerset Maugham. 12. Sinclair Lewis. 13. Victor Hugo. 14. John Steinbeck. 15. Eugene O'Neill. 16. Edna Ferber. 17. William Makepeace Thackeray. 18. Robert Browning. 19. George Eliot. 20. James Cain. 21. Arnold Bennett. 22. William Shakespeare. 23. James M. Barrie. 24. Sinclair Lewis. 25. John Galsworthy.

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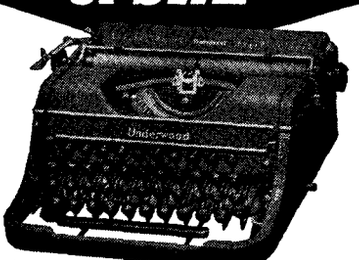

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BOOKED for TRAVEL

WHAT PRICE PESOS?

THINGS are going to be different in Mexico this year. The government has at last taken the business of tourist cost control into its own official hands. Too many vacationists were coming back to the states with tales of outrageous prices and poor conditions. U. S. tourists finally hit the Mexican tourist business below the border. Thirty-thousand fewer Americans went to Mexico in 1947 than in 1946, and the revenue of dollars skidded, too. Since 1945, tourism has been the principal source of dollars in Mexico, and the slump was alarming.

A new law has been passed creating an official tourist commission empowered to establish a price ceiling for hotels, restaurants, transportation, and virtually every tourist facility in the republic. Anybody who refuses to cooperate will face a jail sentence of fifteen days and a fine of some $2,000, which, at 4.85 to the dollar, makes an awful lot of pesos.

As if this wasn't revolutionary enough for revolutionary Mexico, the government had yet another deuce up its sleeve, a rather pleasant one at that. It is about to go into the hotel business itself in a big and elegant way. After eleven years of building, its $8,000,000, ten-story, 600-room del Prado Hotel is scheduled for a March opening. The latest inventory of the del Prado's appointments turned up four public dining rooms, four cocktail bars, six French chefs, twenty-five stores, a Turkish bath, an elevator for cars, and a bank where you can cash a check at any hour of the day or night. Murals have been painted by Covarrubias and Diego Rivera, public rooms are executed in native marble and marquetry, and the whole place is air-conditioned. Prices in the del Prado will be just about half of what is being charged for comparable quarters in the best hotels in Mexico City and Acapulco today.

Diego Rivera and Dolores del Rio—His pictures are at the del Prado, hers at the Rex.

So far, prices have dropped about fifteen per cent since last fall. Now Americans seeking adequate though moderate accommodations will have to pay some $12 a day to get along in Mexico. A tourist card which costs $2.10 is all that is necessary for entry into the country, and soon the price for the permit is expected to be abolished too.

You can stay reasonably fit in Mexico by avoiding salads, peeling fresh fruit, drinking only bottled water, and taking it rather easy the first few days in the high altitudes. There are any number of French, German, and Hungarian restaurants in Mexico City, which is a sort of small-time Paris. American epicurean nationalism has contributed to other dining places a gigantic drug store known as Sanborn's which specializes in sandwiches, hamburgers, and hot-fudge sundaes.

From the native kitchens the hardy and the intrepid can try *arroz con pollo*, which is chicken and rice; tamales and pork; turkey with spiced chocolate sauce; white fish of Patzcuaro, and *enchiladas suizas*, tortilla draped in sour cream and tomato sauce.

Everybody eats between two and four, and it is tried and proved custom to have a light supper at night. In the capital, the Flor de Mexico and Café Tacuba serve late evening snacks of chicken tamale and hot chocolate. Tequila, as you must have heard by now, is the national drink, and a pinch of salt and a taste of lime go with each dose. Americans mix it with coke and grapefruit juice which, of course, is considered pure heresy locally.

Mexico City has a bright night life, often more formal than you might expect. The bullfighting season begins in October and lasts through March. You can watch jai alai every night but Monday at the Fronton Mexico. The Rex shows U. S. and British movies, and Dolores del Rio still flickers on the marquees of the theatres. Cockfights are forbidden, but you can catch one at San Bartolo Naucalpan, a forty-five-minute drive northeast of the capital, at eleven a.m. Sundays.

HORACE SUTTON.

Thirty-thousand fewer Americans came visiting in 1947 and Mexicans were worried.

Paradoxical Paradise

NOW IN MEXICO. By Hudson Strode. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1947. 368 pp. $5.

Reviewed by JOSEPHUS DANIELS

In Mexico you will find strange paradoxes
abiding under the clearest skies.

IF THE reader of this book has never been to Mexico, he will wish to rush to the nearest ticket office and then fly to Mérida as the starting place to follow the entrancing journey through Mexico and meet all the types of Mexicans who intrigued Mr. Strode. If he has been privileged to visit Mexico, the vivid descriptions of the places and people Mr. Strode has known in that never-to-be-forgotten land, will so entrance him that he will be overcome with nostalgia and will hear the call of *animus revertendi*. As for myself, I lived over the travels I had made in most place of which Mr. Strode writes and recalled the people the author makes live in the pages of his "Now In Mexico."

In his former volume "Timeless Mexico" Mr. Strode wrote mainly of his early visits, with the historical interest uppermost. His picture of Mexican leaders and Mexican affairs was illuminating, but he drew few pictures of the people in the hinterland of Mexico—what they did and how they reacted—and no adequate story of Mexico City and its environs. This volume meets the natural desire by those who would know both

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Mexicans and Mexico. There is nothing in its entrancing pages of dull statistics or siccant description of cities or haciendas or cathedrals or volcanoes.

"Now in Mexico" deals with folks —the real folks who are Mexico, how they live, what they think, what they say, where they live—with pen pictures of the contrasts that make Mexico so interesting. You visit shrines and cathedrals; hear folklore and tradition; talk to the peons and the haciendados; feel the dire poverty in adobe houses, and the grandeur in the old Spanish homes of architectural beauty. You follow real trails that interest and inform.

Quite appropriately to open doors long closed to most readers and travelers, Mr. Strode first visits beautiful Mérida, lying so far from the beaten track that few visitors feel its charm —a charm that has enchanted tourists in the centuries since Cortez first approached Mexico by way of Cozumel, where the glitter of a little gold was the appetizer to dreams of avarice. When, in the late Thirties, my wife and I visited Mérida and with that as the base spent days at Chichen Itza, where Sylvanus Morley was recreating the ancient temples and courts and wonders of Mayan architecture, it took days to make the trip from Mexico City. Mr. Strode arrived in Yucatán's capital in a few hours by air transport. Mérida was a flourishing town before Sir Walter Raleigh's ships left England; and, at one time, by the monopoly of henequen, had more millionaires than any city of its population. Old palaces still stand in the beautiful old city, which with air transportation will open a new vista of interest and beauty to tourists. But the crowning interest to the visitor is the now accessible restoration at Chichen Itatz of the Temple of the Tigers, the Temple of Warriors, the Sacred Well, the Observatory, the Thousand Columns, the Nunnery, the Ball and other courts, created in the time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary and now restored in its pristine beauty. The author wonders why Americans go to Egypt to see ancient temples and shrines when Chichen Itza shrines tell the story of ancient lore, architecture, agriculture, and religion.

Beginning with the most ancient civilization in Yucatán, Mr. Strode carries you through nearly 400 pages of travel, closing with making you feel the tragedy of the Maximilian rule in a visit to Queretaro where Maximilian, of royal blood, the aristocratic Miramón, and the Indian Mejia were executed by order of Benito Juárez after their trial. On the day the author was in Queretaro the flags were at half-mast. Why? In memory of the Austrian usurper? No, in memory of the fifty-first anniversary of the death of Benito Juárez, Mexico's George Washington and Abraham Lincoln—the Indian who sent Maximilian and his military chieftains to their death before the firing squad.

The journeys take you to Taxco, the art center; to Cuernavaca; Acapulco; Quiroga; the City of the Angels; San Miquel de Allenda; and other places of historic and picturesque interest. In all you see the people—the Indian who speaks no written language —and Oxaca which gave the Republic its greatest Indian leader, Juárez; Puebla; Cholula with more churches in proportion to population than any other place; pictures and pen pictures of stately cathedrals and churches everywhere, with introduction to Cameron Townsend, the linguist evangel who has translated the scriptures for Indians who had no written language; and a forecast of tomorrow under the administration of Aleman. The numerous pictures add to the value of the account of the trips and the mingling with the people.

The above review was received by SRL *several days after the death on Jan. 15 of Josephus Daniels, one-time Ambassador to Mexico and editor of the* Raleigh News-Observer.

Forthcoming Spring Books on Mexico

THE MAGIC LAND, MEXICO. *By Ralph Hancock. (Coward-McCann.)*
JOURNEYING THROUGH MEXICO. *By MacKinley Helm. (Little, Brown.)*
TEMPLES IN YUCATAN. *By Laura Gilpin. (Hastings House.)*
THIS IS MEXICO. *By Evalyn McNally and Dr. Andrew McNally, Jr. (Dodd, Mead.)*
NEW GUIDE TO MEXICO. *By Frances Toor. (Crown.)*

As They Really Are

THESE ARE THE MEXICANS. By Herbert Cerwin. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc. 1947. 384 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by JOSEPHINA NIGGLI

RICHARD HARDING DAVIS fostered the legend of the "Banana Republics" in the early 1900's. Since then the average North American envisions the average Latin American sleeping under a palm tree between languid bouts of comic-opera revolutions. It is therefore a relief to read Mr. Cerwin's book, which shows the Southern Mexican as he really is. Mr. Cerwin's comments on the Northern section are not as sound, but this is readily understandable if you apply the same measuring rod to the United States. An authority on Georgia or Alabama can easily go astray on Vermont or New Hampshire. There is just as wide a difference between the north and south of Mexico.

Mr. Cerwin must have been aware of this, because he restricts most of his book to the South. His "Introduction to Mexico" and his two chapters on Mexico City are unusually fine. Furthermore, Mr. Cerwin has the ability to cut straight to the basics of the Mexican problem, and reveal strengths and weaknesses as they really are, not as Mexicans and North Americans would like them to be. And he does this in a clear, simple prose which never pretends to be literary, but always succeeds in being readable and interesting.

Anyone planning a trip to Mexico should read this honest book, and anyone interested in Latin American relationships should certainly read it; since all of the southern countries when referring to Mexico repeat with feeling the old Mexican maxim (which Mr. Cerwin uses as a chapter heading), "So far from God, and so close to the United States."

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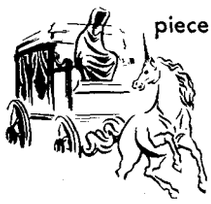

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NEW EDITIONS

OF THE seven critical studies which compose Edmund Wilson's "The Wound and the Bow," recently restored to print by the Oxford University Press ($3.50), the longest and most interesting is concerned with Dickens. Mr. Wilson has brought into focus a considerable body of information regarding this novelist, and from the information has gained valuable insights and drawn important conclusions. His work, in this instance, is a nice compound of psychological biography and literary criticism. Viewing his subject with his eyes fixed on both producer and product, he has emphasized the inner strains and stresses resulting from Dickens's social maladjustment and domestic difficulties; traced the twin themes of rebellion and criminality which run through the novels; done justice to the author's generally unappreciated symbolism; followed the progress of Dickens's social criticism, which led him, at last, "to despair utterly of the prospering middle class"; underlined the fundamental dualism of the writer's nature; noted the steady progress of his art and his increasing psychological depth; and, finally, thrown light upon the mystery of "Edwin Drood."

This is a notable achievement within the limits of a hundred-page paper. In "The Kipling That Nobody Read" Mr. Wilson is, I think, somewhat less successful (largely because he devotes so much space to the Kipling that everyone *has* read), and in his studies of Casanova, Edith Wharton, Hemingway, "Finnegans Wake," and the "Philoctets" he is less ambitious; but, as the waiter remarks of Mr. Bohun, in Shaw's "You Never Can Tell," it is always a pleasure "to watch the working of his trained and powerful mind—very stimulating, very entertaining and instructive indeed."

Knopf's Western Americana, edited by Robert Glass Cleland and Oscar Lewis, got off to a fine start with Dan de Quille's "The Big Bonanza." And now comes the second volume of the series: Charles Howard Shinn's "Mining Camps" ($4), with an introduction by Joseph Henry Jackson. Less potentially popular than De Quille's history of the great Virginia City mines, Shinn's volume is a solid contribution to the American record. Indeed, it was meant to be more than that, for the author of this "Study in American Frontier Government," first published in 1885, reached back into the past (to ancient and medieval mines, to Cornwall, to Spanish colonial government) for precedents on which to base the codes, courts, and self-control of the Argonauts in the California mining camps. Theirs was a remarkable society, animated by a powerful, effective sense of social responsibility, and Mr. Shinn, while paying due regard to local legacies of Spanish law, argues that this society, in which crime was rare and punishment certain, was made possible only by the enduring political genius of "our Germanic race." The roots of those camps were deep in Lex Saxonum; the camp court was the "folkmoot of our Germanic ancestors." It is now less fashionable to glory in our Germanic heritage than when Shinn sat under Gilman at Johns Hopkins, but Shinn's book remains an authoritative study of its subject.

One of the great books of the world, "The Persian Wars" of Herodotus, in the famous Rawlinson translation, is now available in the Modern Library ($1.25); with an introduction, by Francis R. B. Godolphin, which should serve to inform the newcomer to Herodotus regarding the ancient author's historical theory and practice. Dean Godolphin lays particular and corrective emphasis upon the "systematic error," identified with the dominant pattern so dear to Herodotus, "which makes his work propaganda for the belief that the gods visit huge penalties on human arrogance."

In Guy Howard's "Walkin' Preacher of the Ozarks" (Grosset, $1) the author, who walks nearly 4,000 miles a year to bring God to the Ozarks, throws some light into sections of Arkansas and Missouri that are dark to most of us. . . . Edna Ferber's "Show Boat," with its cargo of sentimentality, humor, and romantic drama, still prosperously rides the waters of the Mississippi (Penguin, 25¢). . . . "Good Night, Sweet Prince," biography of the one and only John Barrymore, written in Gene Fowler's lushest prose, is a recruit to Pocket Books (25¢) . . . Kathryn Forbes's homely, appealing tales of Mama, published as "Mama's Bank Account," in which John van Druten clairvoyantly spied dramatic gold, is now a Bantam Book (25¢). And Norman Lindsay's desert-island - three - men - and-a-girl-striptease, "The Cautious Amorist," is also among the Bantams.

BEN RAY REDMAN.

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The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING		PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
	Recording Technique	*Surface*	
TWO ALBUMS FROM BOSTON			
OFFENBACH - ROSENTHAL, GAITE PARISIENNE. (Complete ballet score.) Boston "Pops" Orch. Arthur Fiedler. Victor M 1147 (4) (*Also plastic*: Victor V 9)	An effective recording, brilliant, very live. Proof again of Pops's ability to give impression of wide range, via mike placement, acoustics, perhaps middle highs upped. Some poor surfaces my copy.	A— to B	Eight sides of delightful Parisian froth, brilliantly, lightly played as the "Pops" can do it. Recommended for skating rinks (you'll be swinging and swaying, yourself). Wonderful stuff! But not for heavy-weight ears.
HAYDN, SYMPHONY #94 ("SURPRISE"). Boston Symphony Orch. Koussevitzky. Victor M 1155 (3)	The considerable liveness here gives brilliance but isn't too well suited to intimate style of Haydn symphony. (Would be fine for later music.) Otherwise a fine recording.	A	In this type music Koussevitzky is less eccentric as he grows older. A casual, objective reading, untense, but marked by super BSO string playing. Lacks "chamber" atmosphere; otherwise as good as you'll ever hear it.
IN THE CLASSIC DEPARTMENT . . .			
BACH, CANTATA #140, "WACHET AUF" ("Sleepers Wake"). RCA Victor Chorale, Orch. soloists. Robert Shaw. Victor M 1162 (4 10")	Usual fine balance, clarity of elements in Shaw's recording. But vocal solos have dull sound, lack sibilants. Instrumental solos are better. Chorus fine.	B+	An accurate, professional performance (complete with solo numbers). Pleasure to hear the lightness, clarity result of proper small size, balance of forces. Soloists rightly subordinated. Yet, again, a more muscular than truly sensitive reading.
BEETHOVEN, SYMPHONY #4, in B flat. Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell. Columbia M 705 (4)	Widest-range shellac recording (there is sound here up to 10,000), and the current sharp, clear, close-up type of mike pickup make this an interesting comparison with other "concert-hall"-style live recordings.	A	How can one choose between the nine symphonies? How can this wonderful work be so ignored? The more the pleasure for being relatively unfamiliar. Musically a first-rate interpretation, marred by some uneven playing.
ALBUM MOZARTIANO (CONCERT ARIAS FOR BASS), Italo Tajo, anon. orch. Cetra 104 (3) *Comparisons*: (MOZART OPERATIC ARIAS. Eleanor Steber, RCA Victor Orch, Morel.) Victor M 1157 (2) (MOZART OPERATIC ARIAS. Ezio Pinza, Metropol. Opera Orch. Bruno Walter.) Columbia M 643 (4)	This Italian recording is good to the music; but is only fair technically. Highs lacking (little above 6-7000). Voice a bit dull. Liveness OK. Steber is resonant, but over-loud, best in softer parts. Pinza album an unnatural yet exciting close-up of voice. Electrifying "presence," spitting sibilants. Cf. Tajo.	A (A—) (A—)	Mozart solo arias galore, familiar and unfamiliar. Tajo a fine bass, highly musical but not as dramatic as Pinza. The Tajo selections, isolated concert arias, are of great interest. Pinza's are more familiar (but one is same as Tajo), a superb and exciting collaboration with Walter. Steber's are still more familiar. She is dramatic, but often forced; not true Mozart style.
GOOD SHOW			
GOULD, INTERPLAY ("American Concertette"). Morton Gould, piano; Robin Hood Dell Orch. Columbia X 289 (2)	A super-brilliant recording, lots of high highs and quite live. Good piano—it's at some distance, apparently, thus avoiding peaks, boom. This seems to have new low turnover point (more bass).	A	A worth-while work, with a good deal more to it than previous larger Gould works. Written for Iturbi, then made into ballet. Gould seems to be latching onto the new semi-pop, semi-classic style, with success. (See Bernstein, *SRL* Nov. 22.) More power to him! EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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GREEN JOURNEY

"And 'a babbled of green fields."
King Henry V, Act III, Scene iii

WHEN Falstaff lay and fumbled with the sheet,
His bold effrontery at last undone,
He babbled of the fields, his thoughts outrun
By dreams of meadows cool beneath his feet.
Some think that he was trying to repeat
A long-forgotten psalm; and some that one
Lost day of youth returning with its sun
And shadowed grass had made his passing sweet.

When I have gone too far for any signs
Of parting, save to mumble and to smile,
Recall these sun-tipped hills that led us high,
Dark shadows pointing upward through the pines,
And know that I have passed the first long mile
Of my green journey to a wider sky.

CORA WILCOX DREYER.

* * *

I thank Anita Leiser of St. Luke's Place, this city, for the following:

> Your column telling about Rupert Brooke's last poem which appeared in the July 5 *SRL* interested me very much, and I meant to write at that time to say that I have here a copy of Ernest Raymond's "Tell England," which Mrs. Challenger mentions. It was first published by Cassell & Co. in Great Britain in 1922. Since the copy which she has sent you differs a bit from that appearing in the book itself, I thought perhaps you would like to have this exact copy. Here it is:

For all emotions that are tense and strong,
And utmost knowledge, I have lived for these—
Lived deep, and let the lesser things live long.
The everlasting hills, the lakes, the trees,
Who'd give their thousand years to sing this song
Of Life, and Man's high sensibilities,
Which I into the face of Death can sing—
O Death, thou poor and disappointed thing—

Strike if thou wilt, and soon; strike breast and brow
For I have lived: and thou canst rob me now
Only of some long life that ne'er has been
The life that I have lived, so full, so keen,
Is mine! I hold it firm beneath thy blow
And, dying, take it with me where I go.

Since the poem is unacknowledged in the book, I had always taken it for granted that it was written by Ernest Raymond himself.

* * *

SUMMARIES OF KNOWLEDGE SUITABLE FOR ENGRAVING ON THE HEAD OF A PIN

I. LITERATURE

Writers strive
While they're alive,
And get ahead
When they are dead.

II. HISTORY

Peace the precious time affords
To sharpen up again our swords.

III. SCIENCE

The sterile knife
Cuts open life:
This way extends it;
That way, ends it.

IV. ETHICS

Man does ill
Because he will.
Man does good
Because he should.

RICHARD ARMOUR.

* * *

Two books of poems that somehow got overlooked in *SRL* reviewing during the last year and a half are decidedly worth a reminder in THE NEST, both books well worth your while. The first is "Stars and Atoms Have No Size" (Dutton), by A. M. Sullivan, the best book, to my mind, that "A. M." has ever written, with a most interesting foreword by him. He treats of all the things you wouldn't think were susceptible of poetic treatment, like—at random—Oil Derricks, Stillson Wrench, Yale Lock, Pulley, ley, etc., and has a remarkable long poem on "The Bottom of the Sea." I think as time goes on that this book will steadily forge ahead of many now much more hysterically hailed. The second is Melville Cane's "A Wider Arc" (Harcourt), a collection of his poems both serious and light. He has a graceful wit, but he is considerably more than a light versifier. These poems are the work of his past quarter-century. They are brief, but the fruit of a thoroughly mature and interesting philosophic mind. You will find Mr. Cane's book most companionable for many a spare hour.

* * *

THE CHINESE PHEASANT

Superb
He stands
Silver and blue
With princely panache;
Ebony-tipped, his snowy feathers trail
Upon the earth; proudly proudly
The sapphire breast is raised.
Gleaming in autumn with
Deep emerald and indigo
Motionless he lifts
His crimson crest;
A ruby eye
Looks out
Coldly
Clear.

KATHARINE DAY LITTLE.

* * *

JUST ONE OF THOSE THINGS

"If we are not affected, we ought to be, by an imagination that can conceive . . . the homesick little obstinate sobs of things thrown into being."
—Robert Fitzgerald in *The New Republic.*

A courtly critic now fits with gauzy wings
The homesick little obstinate sobs of things.

Yet the homesick sobs of the little obstinate things
Are a little obstinate when the poet sings.

Unfailingly fresh contemplation robs
Those little things of their homesick obstinate sobs,

Till one seems likely to dislike as such
Those little obstinates sobbing around so much.

And yet one can't dismiss as merely brittle
The obstinate homesick things that sob so little.

Though possibly I am obstinate, disagreeing
With the homesick sobbing of things thrown into being.

Yet to one query tottering reason clings:
Why sobbing homesick are *what* obstinate little things?

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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(Continued on page 42)

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(Continued from page 41)

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 726

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

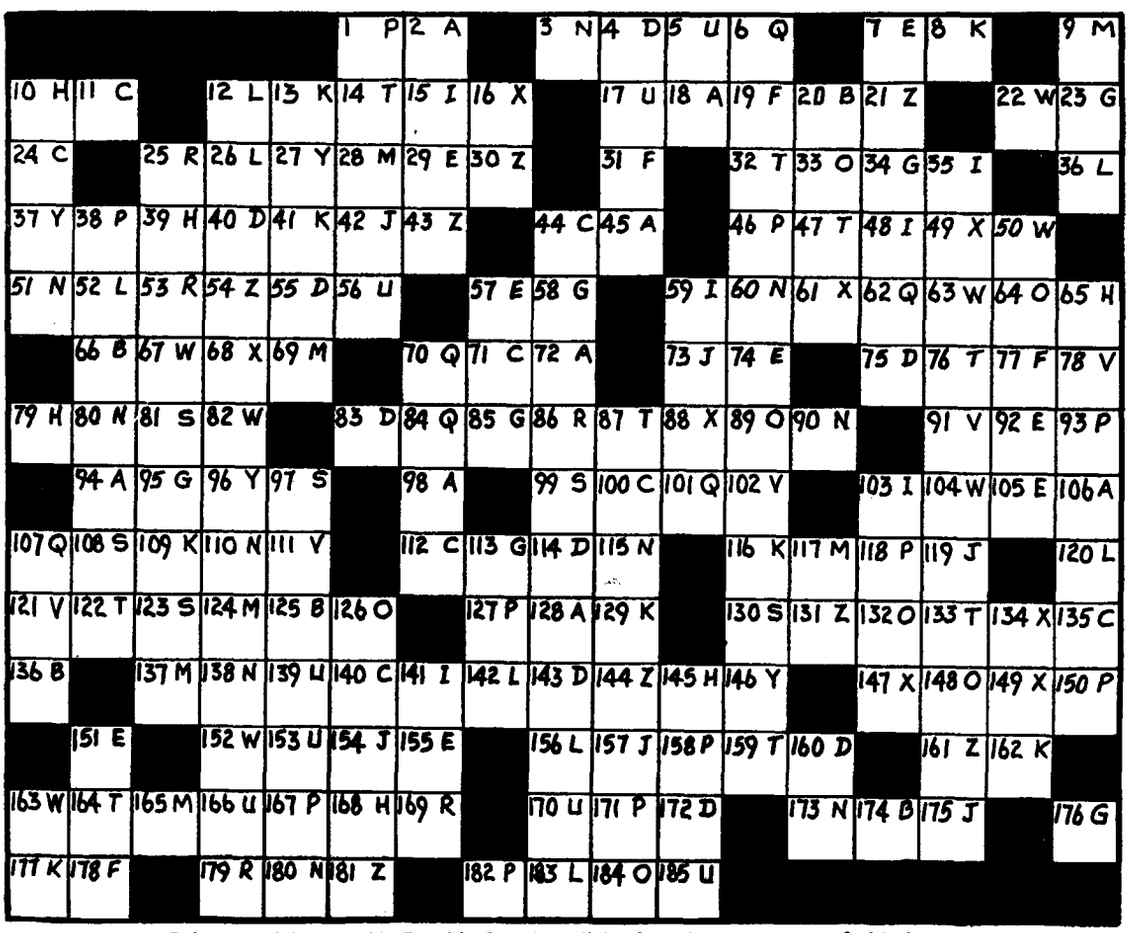
By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. To depress or sink (2 wds.).	18 2 98 106 72 45 94 128
B. A wail or wailing cry.	174 136 125 66 20
C. A double star whose members are nearly equal in magnitude (Astron.; 2 wds.).	44 112 100 71 11 135 24 140
D. Virile; vigorous (colloq.; comp.).	172 40 55 83 143 160 114 4 75
E. Overstrained.	155 105 151 57 74 92 7 29
F. A married gypsy woman.	178 19 77 31
G. Beethoven's only opera.	176 95 34 23 85 113 58
H. In actual existence (Latin phrase).	10 145 39 168 79 65
I. Mother of *Rhadamanthus* (Gr. myth.).	35 48 15 103 59 141
J. Undersecretary of State (U.S., 1947).	42 157 154 119 73 175
K. Masks; particularly half-masks worn at masquerades.	129 177 116 13 8 162 41 109
L. False; double-dealing (comp.).	142 156 183 36 120 26 52 12
M. Birds of the species *Upupa epops*, common in Europe, Asia, N. Africa.	9 117 28 165 124 69 137
N. Each second or alternate (2 wds.).	110 51 180 3 90 173 80 115 138 60
O. Having a keen appetite or desire for something.	33 64 148 132 184 126 89
P. One whose business is to make sport for others (comp.).	46 167 158 118 182 127 150 93 38 171 1
Q. Wife of Capaneus (Gr. myth.).	84 62 70 6 101 107
R. Colophony.	53 25 169 86 179
S. Mischievous.	123 99 130 81 108 97
T. Musical extravaganza by Arthur Sullivan with F. C. Burnand (in D'Oyly Carte repertoire).	87 76 122 14 133 159 32 47 164
U. An inhabitant of the "Wonder State."	17 166 185 153 56 170 5 139
V. Columbine in the opera "I Pagliacci".	121 78 102 111 91
W. Arousing the tender emotions like pity, sorrow, sympathy, *etc.*	104 63 22 152 163 50 67 82
X. The intensity factor of chemical energy.	149 134 68 61 49 88 147 16
Y. That which gives piquant or pungent flavor.	146 37 27 96
Z. Public gossip (2 wds.).	21 144 181 54 161 131 43 30

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean n o t h i n g. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 12 of this issue.

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BY: SERGE PROKOFIEFF, COMPOSER OF "PETER AND THE WOLF"

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